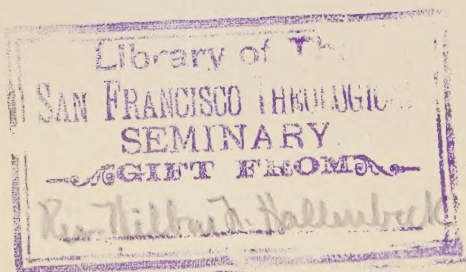


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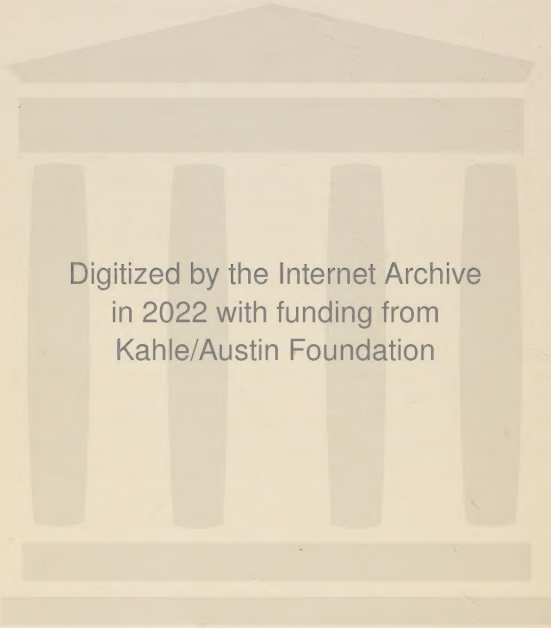
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CONDUCTED BY THE

REV. DAVID THOMAS.

VOL. IV.—Nos. 21 to 26.



"I KNOW WELL I OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ANY DESIGN FOR MYSELF, WHICH ADMITS NOT OF SUBORDINATION TO THE INTEREST AND HONOUR OF THE GREAT GOD AND MY REDEEMER, AND WHICH IS NOT ACTUALLY SO SUBORDINATED."

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P R E F A C E .

IN presenting the FOURTH VOLUME of the "Homilist" to the public, the Editor is happy to say, that the circulation has been gradually increasing from the beginning ; and he trusts that the work has been improving in merit. It has won enthusiastic friends amongst the most learned and thoughtful teachers in all churches. He cannot better describe this volume, than by quoting the preface to the former ones.

First. The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly ;—but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and to polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly. The book has no *denominationalism*: it has no special reference to "*our* body," or to "*our* church." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the "*Homilist*" to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, not as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly. The book has no *polemical theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep, and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the

heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight, were comprehended in its expansion.”

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the “last day,” prove, that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the “*Homilist*” did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man !

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park.

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ALL the articles in the Volume were written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have their Author's names or initials attached to them.

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A H O M I L Y

ON

The Impotency of Time;

OR, THE ETERNALLY PERMANENT AMIDST THE
CONSTANTLY FLUCTUATING.

“That which hath been is now.”—Eccles. iii. 15.

“IMPOTENCY OF TIME”! Why time is anything but impotent! Is not its history a record of stupendous achievements? Are not the whole scene of our observation and sphere of our knowledge covered with tokens of its power? Do we not see, on every hand, signs of its *destructive* force in the beings, systems, institutions, cities, and empires, which it is fast reducing to ruins; and in the mementoes of others, which it has long since destroyed? Where are the magnificent cities and mighty nations of which we read in history? Where are the untold generations that have successively tenanted this planet for well nigh sixty centuries? And where are the great men who appeared in each revolving age, and have left the impress of their genius upon all the epochs that followed? Has not time carried “them away as with a flood”?—Like clouds on the wings of the wind, straws on the bosom of the ebbing wave—has not time borne them off? And then, have we not, also, ever-abounding proofs of its *constructive* powers? Do we not see them, both in those existences, sciences, arts, societies, and empires, which it is calling into being, and in those which it is nursing to maturity? “Time impotent,” indeed! Its hand is on all things, and all things yield to its touch; it is the mighty sea that bears all things to our shore; and, anon, bears all away. Such we imagine, may be the cogitations of some thoughtful brother,

as he reads the title of this homily which we pen, just as the night of one year is about breaking into the dawn of another.

Albeit, contrary though it may seem to our *common* ideas and feelings, a little thinking on the subject will convince us, that the power of time is seeming, rather than real ; and that there are high and practical senses in which it may be regarded as impotent. Exactly the reverse of what Bacon predicated of "fame," is true of time. "Fame," said the philosopher, "is like a river that beareth up things light and swollen, and drowns things weighty and solid." We hope to show, that time is like a river that beareth up things weighty and solid, and drowns things light and swollen.

"That which hath been is now." Time has not done much, notwithstanding all ; "for that which hath been is now."

This language will apply—

I. TO ALL THE ELEMENTS OF MATERIAL EXISTENCE. The forms of the material world are constantly changing. Whole islands emerge from the ocean, whilst broad acres once tilled by busy man are entombed beneath its waves. The herbs, and flowers, and trees, of the plantal realm, and the million tribes of air, and earth, and sea, belonging to the animal dominion, have changed many a thousand times since the days of Noah, and are changing every hour. But the elements of which the first types of all were formed are the same.—*Elementally*, "That which hath been is now ;" the forms only are new, the materials are old. God makes the same atoms serve the purpose of many species ; yes, and of many generations too. The dust beneath our feet has often moved with life and will throb with life again. The raw materials, out of which the principle of life constructs its organs and weaves its garments from age to age, are always here. The stuff of which the visible universe is made is indestructible, says the physical philosopher ; "nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Could you burn up the globe, or dissolve the stars, you would neither

increase nor diminish ought of the *substance* of things. Time through all its mighty revolutions, cannot destroy an *atom*.

The language of the text applies—

II. TO ALL THE SPIRITS OF MANKIND. Argument, we think, is not wanting to prove that all the human souls that ever have “been, are now.” On what do I base the conviction, that all the souls that ever have lived, are living still? Is it, first, on the *immateriality* of the soul? As I know nothing of the essence of matter or mind, the word “immaterial” has no meaning to me, and, therefore, how can I logically predicate anything concerning it? Is it, secondly, on the wonderful things which the human mind has achieved? I have heard the magnificent deeds of man’s genius enumerated as evidence of its immortality. I have heard it asked, “Can it be supposed that the genius displayed in ancient buildings and breathed in ancient sculpture—the intellect that has weighed the mountains and measured the stars, grasped the architypal ideas of this wondrous universe, and subordinated the mightiest forces to its ends—the soul that has struck such notes from the harp of poetry, as have thrilled the heart of successive ages?” I have heard it asked, I say, “Could less than souls immortal thus have done?” As poetry I feel the force of this, but as an argument for the soul’s immortality, it is worth nothing to me, unless it could be proved that all things are immortal that produce a *lasting* influence. But if there be truth in science, there is not a tiny insect whose fluttering wing will not send its vibrating influence through all the realms of matter.

Is it, thirdly, its *desire* for another life? No! For, let it be assumed that mankind have an instinctive longing for a future state, I see not how this can be an argument for such a state, unless it could be proved that all men’s native desires are now realised; which is by no means the fact. Do not all men desire wealth, power and happiness? But are not millions poor, degraded, and unhappy? Is it, fourthly, on the capabilities of the soul for doing what, here, it has no opportunity to effect? I believe, indeed, that no souls

are fully developed here—that those who have reached the highest stage of growth and progress depart with unnumbered germs of power, which the influences of time have scarcely quickened into life. But then, a few years or centuries in the future state may be sufficient to exhaust every power; and those souls, therefore, who left this scene thousands of years ago, may have worn themselves out long ere this. Is it, fifthly, on the moral discrepancies of this state? I grant, indeed, that on the supposition, that there is no hereafter, the apparent disorders of the human world seem to reflect much, not only upon the goodness, but even the justice of God; and that it is only in the belief of a hereafter that the divine character appears to me in an aspect suited to enlist my confidence and awaken my love. But then, may not a certain limited period in the after-life be sufficient for the rectification of all this? May not the evils connected with the antediluvian, patriarchal, apostolic, ages, have been adjusted, long before this, and consequently, all the souls of these generations have gone out? Is it, sixthly, on the constitutional immortality of the soul? Some religious writers speak of the soul's immortality as a *necessity* of its nature. We confess our inability to understand such language. To us, the "necessary existence" of any creature is a flagrant absurdity. There is but one *necessary existent* in the universe; and all other existences are dependent entirely upon *His* will. He may will the strongest natures out of being in a moment. On what then, do I base my conviction, that all the human souls that ever have lived, are living now, and will live for ever? Purely on the testimony of Christ and his apostles. In the nature of the case there is but *one* way of knowing how long any creature is to live; and that is by ascertaining what is the *will of the necessary existing one* in relation to him. If *he* has willed that man shall live a year—however constitutionally strong—he shall live a year and no more; or if *he* has willed that he shall live for ever—however constitutionally weak—he *shall* live for ever. To know the limits of any being's existence, I must know the will of God respecting it. All depends on

His will. But has He revealed this in relation to human existence? He has! Christ comes forth to testify of this will; and he tells us in language most unmistakable, that God has willed that man's existence shall have no termination.* "The evidence of scripture," says Isaac Taylor, "will be found to possess a force by implication of principles, which far surpasses any imaginable value that ought to be attached to the etymological import of single words."

On this testimony of scripture, therefore, I base my conviction, that all the human souls that ever have been, are now—that not one of the mighty millions who spent his short and misty day of life under these heavens is lost; the tempests of revolving ages have not extinguished one; but rather fanned all the sparks of human intelligences into ever-brightening flames. All are thinking, feeling, acting, still. Their bodies are dust: but their bodies were theirs—not *they*; their instruments, not themselves.

"Distinct as is the swimmer from the flood,
The lyrist from his lyre."

I believe all this, because He who came forth to teach me the will of the NECESSARY EXISTENT ONE, has affirmed of human souls, THAT THEY SHALL NEVER DIE.

The language will apply—

III. TO ALL THE GENERAL TYPES OF HUMAN CHARACTER. The character of every man springs from some one presiding sympathy—some strong liking; all his thoughts, purposes, and acts, stream from this, and may be easily resolved into it; nay, are its very modifications and forms. You may trace, perhaps, all the varieties of human character to five or six different regal sympathies. For example, there is the *inordinate love of pleasure*. What shall we eat and what shall we drink, and how shall we best gratify the various impulses of our carnal nature?—are the great moving

* Matt. x. 28. Luke xvi. 19. &c. xx. 38. John v. 24. viii. 51. xii. 24-28. xiv. 2, 3. 2 Cor. v. 1-10. 2 Tim. i. 10. 1 Thess. iv. 18. Phil. i. 23. 1 Peter iv. 6.

questions of those who are under the sway of this principle—*pleasure* to them is everything. There is *the undue love of gain*. How shall we best increase our possessions, get the most of this world's goods, and build up magnificent fortunes? Such is the moving principle of this class;—*gain* to them is everything. There is *the vain love of show*. How best to attract attention, and win the admiration and praise of their compeers, is the great aim of those under this principle—*appearance* to them is everything. There is *the mere love of enquiry*. A strong desire to hear something new, or to find out something strange, is their ever prompting impulse. Hence, they spend their time in gossip with their neighbours, or in perusing the news of the day, or in the higher region of scientific research. There is nothing practical about them—mere news to them is everything. There is *the inordinate love of power*. In numerous cases this becomes the master principle of action, and the foundation on which the whole superstructure of character is based; you can trace every purpose and act to the ruling desire of power. There is *the false love of religion*. How to appease the wrath of an incensed deity—how to escape the fearful flames of retribution, and how to win the felicities of eternity, are the ever-anxious questions of those who are under the government of this principle. The dread of hell and the fear of heaven fill their imagination and urge them at once to the greatest sacrifices, the most sanguinary deeds, and the most phrensied superstition. And there is *the holy love of God*. The supreme desire of those under this principle is, whatsoever they do, whether they eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God.

Now, we do not say, that all the impulses which we have hastily referred to but the last, are all wrong in themselves: on the contrary, they are all precious gifts of God—instincts, given for beneficent ends. They are only wrong when they gain the ascendancy; for then they form distinct types of corrupt characters. The characters of mankind, I know, may be divided into more numerous classes; but these principles seem to me to lie at the base of all the varieties.

The plants may be endlessly different in build, and branch, and hue, but they seem only to spring from these few kinds of seed ; the edifices may be of great varieties of shape and size, but they are all built on one of these few foundation-stones.

Supposing, then, that these comprehend all the various classes of human character, we may, with the utmost truth, adopt the language of the text and say, that "that which hath been is now." That all the great types of character have been here, almost from the earliest dawn of history. It would be easy to select them from the historic records of every age and clime : but we need not go farther than the pages of this Bible which are open to us all. Do you require from ancient times, a type of the lovers of pleasure who teem around you now ? See HEROD on his "birth-day ;" and in him behold the great lineaments and glowing inspiration of them all. Do you require a type of the lovers of gain who throng our streets and crowd our very temples in this mercenary age ? See the "rich man" in the parable, and in his sordid monologue, hear the language of their hearts, "I will pull down my barns and build greater." Do you require a type of the lovers of show ? See HAMAN, whose highest idea of human honor seems to have been to wear "the royal apparel," and to ride upon the king's horse through "the streets of the city," to attract the gaze and obtain the plaudits of the thoughtless crowd. In the sentiment of this shallow man behold the prevailing idea of the thousands in these times of hollow seeming, who spend their precious time and power in endeavouring to impress men with their grandeur ; some of whom almost starve themselves and families for "appearance." Do you require a type of the mere lovers of enquiry—the inquisitive news-sockers of every class ? See the Athenians in the days of Paul, who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." This was the basis of the Greek character. Do you require a type of the inordinate lovers of power ? See Sennacherib, who, impelled by an insatiable thirst after power, came up "against all the

fenced cities of Judah and took them ;” vaunting his victories in the ear of Hezekiah, and saying, “Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?” In this man, see the spirit and the features of the little social aspirants, as well as the political despots of every age. I see the picture of your Napoleons and Czars in the gaunt and bloody figure of this Sennacherib. Do you require a type of the false religionist? See the old pharisee making broad his phylacteries, distorting his countenance, and often, and punctually, repeating his formal devotions ; or the devotees of Baal in phrensy, on Carmel’s brow. Do you require a type of the true lovers of God? The Bible abounds with representations of this class, from Enoch down to John.

“That which hath been,” then, in relation to character, “is now.” The same types re-appear in all times. Your Herods and Hamans, your Athenians and Pharisees :—indeed, every character in the Bible, and every character in history, seem to be living again in every age.

The language of the text will apply—

IV. TO ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. All the principles by which both the physical and moral provinces have been controlled from the beginning, are the same now as ever. True, the forms of the *physical* world have passed through various transformations, and may pass through many more. But the laws which moved the first planets, built the first hills, organized the first plants and animals, spread out and tinted the first landscape, remain intact. So of the *moral*. The forms of God’s dealings with humanity have passed through various changes. There was once simple Patriarchalism ; then came gorgeous Judaism ; and now we have spiritual Christianity ; but the same principles are seen in each and all. Because of this unalterableness, the physical philosopher can prophecy of things to come centuries hence ; he can tell to the hour when an eclipse shall take place, when the tide shall overflow its boundary, and when another comet shall sweep the horizon ; and be-

cause of this, the moral philosopher, too, can predict with an unerring certainty, that if minds continue under the influence of certain principles of depravity, most terrible storms of anguish await them ; but if under the influence of holy truth, their path shall be as the shining light, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And because of this, moreover, the good people who rightly appreciate the influences of the last economy, can appreciate in full the heart-language of the good people who rightly appreciated the influences of the first. Asaph can express his feelings in the language of Job, and Paul in the language of David, and the good of this age in the language of either or all.

The history of human legislation is a history of law-alteration ; but all God's laws seem to be unchangeable. Harmony with them is the creature's highest destiny ; rebellion against them is his inevitable ruin. They neither pause nor change, either for angels or men. Humanity, alas ! is out of harmony with those laws ; and this is the reason of its physical and moral miseries. Restoration to harmony, as a problem, is solved by christianity ; as a duty, it is the end of our probationary life.

" Arise, O man, retune thy heart ;
In nature's chorus blend thy part."

The language of the text applies—

V. TO THE GRAND DESIGN OF ALL THINGS. What is the great design of all things ? On the assumption that the author of all is *moral mind*,—distinguished by rectitude and love, and that all intelligent beings are His offspring. Is it not lawful to conclude that the grand design in all must be the holy development of creature-minds in gratitude, reverence, love, and assimilation to himself ? What we might thus, *a priori*, infer, all the facts of nature, history, consciousness, and the Bible, contribute to establish. Look at *nature* ; does it not express the great INVISIBLE in such a way as is suited to excite our moral emotions, and to draw our spirits upward to Himself ? Have not all its forms

and voices a *moral* significance? Look at *history*. Have not all its events, whether of a painful or pleasant character, a fitness to turn the human spirit towards thoughtfulness, rectitude, and God? Has not its tendency from the beginning been thus-ward? Look at human *consciousness*. Has there lived a man, that has not *felt* under all the blessings and influences of being, a deep sense of obligation to study, love, and serve, the great God? Look at the *Bible*. Mark the general principles that run through all its economics, and are embodied in all its facts; observe the one spirit of holiness which circulates through its every vein, and gives its blush of moral beauty to the whole. Think of *redemption*, its central fact; and then determine whether the design of the whole is not to lead humanity into right sympathies with God. Indeed, the preceding verse affirms our doctrine. "Whatever God doeth," we are told, "he doeth it that men should fear before him."

Men, alas! have generally acted as if the end of their life were to amass wealth, get power, and display as much pageantry as possible. Foolish beings! they *mistake life*. All things about and within me declare that I am here, not to turn the world into a market, where I am to buy and sell, and get gain; nor even into a school for mere speculative study; that I am here, not to become either rich or learned, but *morally* good:—not to become a great man on earth, in the worldly sense, but a pure seraph in eternity.

The language of the text applies—

VI. TO THE RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HUMAN MEMORY. All that ever "hath been," so far as *humanity is concerned*, "is now" living in the *memory* of all the individual men that ever lived. Memory gathers up every fragment of all "that hath been" to us, so that none may be lost. The path of life through which we have passed, with its thorns and flowers, its hills and dales, its winding walks, its sunshine and its clouds, we shall never leave again; again, and yet again, for ever, we shall retrace our steps, and penetrate the most intricate labyrinths of our past way.

Years cannot rob the soul. It loses nothing by ages, but gains much by every hour. It makes past suns shine, and faded landscapes bloom again. It surrounds itself with the scenes of childhood, calls up the long buried from their graves, and gives them their wonted form and voice. Every day widens the domain of memory, and thus enriches the soul with the treasures of the past. The dealings of God, therefore, towards us, we shall never forget. We shall ever remember the right-hand of the most high, and meditate upon his works of old. Will the antediluvian, think you, ever forget the deluge? Will the Egyptians ever forget the wonders wrought on the banks of the Nile? Will the men of Babylon ever forget that terrible night when their impious monarch saw the "hand-writing on the wall"? Brother, that which has been to man "*is now*" in memory. God's doings have a record. They may not be written in books—for it is but a small fraction of this world's events that have a written history; but the whole is inscribed on the page of memory. Every sentence and every verse, of providential history are written on the disembodied souls of the generations that are gone. The history of man is recorded, not in books, but in souls; and will be seen and studied in the great eternity.

The language of the text will apply—

VII. TO ALL THE CONDITIONS OF MAN'S WELL-BEING. Look at the condition of man's *physical* well-being. Is it not true that on wholesome food, fresh air, and proper exercise, the health of the human body has ever depended? Look at man's *intellectual* well-being. Is it not true that on observation, comparison, research, and reflection, the progress of the human mind has ever been suspended? Look at his *spiritual* well-being. Have not REPENTANCE TOWARDS GOD AND FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST been always the necessary condition of human salvation? In relation to all these things we may say, with the greatest truth that, "that which hath been is now." It has ever been thus, that the man who violated the physical laws of his being has lost his

health and sunk to the grave ; it has always been, that he who neglected the conditions of intellectual improvement has never risen beyond the level of the brute ; and it has always been, that he who did not “repent” *has perished* ; and that he who did not believe has been *damned*.*

Another year of our fleeting life is gone ! The echo of a departing year softens my spirit into pensive sadness. I know not how it affects you, my Brother ! My existence seems to me like some isolated rock on a desolate shore. Many years, like tidal seas, have rolled over that shore, bearing on their bosom much and carrying more away. My soul is filled with the distant murmurings of the last wave of one period ebbing out of sight to return no more, and the roar of the first wave of another year laden with the unknown, but which, as yet, has not broken on the beach, nor yet appeared in sight. I know that some of the coming billows will bear me off into the immeasurable abyss of being, whither the many generations of past times are gone. I wait in suspense, and I feel a solemn sadness at this doleful echo of receding and approaching years.

Oh let me catch the moral of my thesis ! I pine not for the past, for much of what “hath been is now.” Neither indulge vain hopes of the future, for much of what the future will have, “is now.” Rightly let me use the present ; put myself, by the Mediator’s help, into a vital and harmonious connexion with the EVERLASTING. This will make my time eternity ! Yes,

“Eternity ;
Pregnant with all eternity can give,
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.”

* We greatly regret to find, that the space which we allow to this article requires us to cease, especially as this last branch of our subject is eminently practical, and admits of much amplification.

The Pulpit in the Family.

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON CHRISTIAN LOVE.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.”—Phil. i. 9.

CHRISTIAN love is the highest form of love of which we are capable. Being of such an exalted nature, much is expected from it; not too much, however. It may be conceived of in a straitened manner, and too much be expected from certain partial forms of it, but the faith of the world in it is by no means too great; it is a thing of power, and its power is of the highest kind. Although we exercise it, we may say, that it is not our own. We have not originated it, but learned it. Our love in all its aspects is but the result of our experience of the love of Christ, and may be spoken of as a continuation of his love. We do not create; we receive. The first thing in religion, especially in the religion of a sinner, is to receive. The chief thing at first, and always, is receiving. All the rest is the result of our being “made partakers of the divine nature.” Christian love is that which Christ produces in us, and which is like his own.

I. CHRISTIAN LOVE IS UNSELFISH. The first thing we have to guard against is, the absence or extinction of love. Affection may be destroyed—be put out of existence. There are men in the world, who seem to have become parched up and withered; a burden to themselves and a curse to others. Selfish people exhibit a remarkable species of moral madness; if it were possible to reach them, we might call their attention to a thing that seems to have escaped them. They have need to bear in mind that there are two kinds of

property in the world ; one is perishable, and not very much worth, while it lasts ; the other is of infinite worth, and imperishable. This selfishness is but the exchange of one kind of property for another. It is no real acquisition, but only an exchange—it is only the selling of a good conscience for pelf—only the barter of the immortal soul for the world—only the preference of some few petty things, that will soon become a curse, to the favour and friendship of the eternal God. There is as much folly as sin in selfishness.

But there are circumstances in which it seems of little moment, whether or not we take an interest in others. Whenever we think of sympathy, we think also of assistance ; there scarcely seems a step between the two ; they are fast friends, and truly their intimate union is a beautiful sight. We may, however, for a moment separate them, that we may better understand the value of sympathy alone. The poor invalid shut up in his chamber, secluded from all the world, asks of what use it can be to any one that *he* should take an interest in him ? Perhaps not much. People do not come to that sick bed to receive assistance ; that poor invalid may be able to render no assistance—may not be able to utter a word of sympathy that shall reach the object of his regard. Assistance, in any form, may be out of the question, but that is no reason for allowing the feeling of interest to die out ; the thing is so intrinsically fit and beautiful, that even, though it should never, in this world, find any sort of expression towards its objects, there is ample and urgent reason for its being cultivated with all the ardour of passionate pursuit. I do not take into account the expression it may find on the heavenward side. Looking, simply, at the thing in itself, pent up in a man's soul, prevented from rendering aid to any one ; its predominance in the soul is a thing of such worth that he who has it will stand eminent among the hosts of the redeemed. It is a thing to be cultivated, not for its present use alone, but for its own intrinsic worth.

II. CHRISTIAN LOVE IS A PURE, SPIRITUAL THING. The absence of love is not the only thing we have to mourn over; it is, perhaps, as often debased as destroyed. There are not a few people in the world whom we cannot, in any ordinary sense of the word, call selfish, whose influence, notwithstanding, is like a pestilence. There are many we might speak of as unselfish and generous, yet from whom we would shield any one we love. Love is not extinguished, but its quality is low; it is the love of a corrupt mind; and there are few sights in this world so sad as this divine thing, love, sunk in moral debasement. It is far more dangerous than selfishness. A selfish man is like an iceberg, and no one cares to come near him. But love, even when debased, has an attractive power; it draws man within its circle, while selfishness drives off. It is both more contagious and pernicious. Not a few of our ills spring from debased, rather than from extinguished love.

Perhaps, however, we should rather contemplate love from another side. It is not enough that it do not sink, it must rise. There are many forms of love we cannot refrain from admiring for their purity, and tenderness, and strength; but in which, notwithstanding, there is no moral aim. It is no rare thing to see parental love of this character. We can entertain no doubt of its tenderness and power, and can believe it would lead to any endurance and to any sacrifice; but it embraces no spiritual purpose. Now, this affection, however beautiful, is not what the world needs; it lacks power to elevate, and can become instinct with power, only by becoming instinct with spiritual truth. It must be quickened by spiritual thought, and imbued with spiritual aims and aspirations. It is not love, simply, we need, but love that has thus absorbed all spiritual excellence, and become instinct with spiritual power. Christian love, is love alive with spiritual thoughts, and aspirations, and purposes; and is, therefore, possessed of an immense elevating power. It can make us like God himself.

III. CHRISTIAN LOVE IS GUIDED BY INTELLIGENCE AND EXPERIENCE. It is not enough that we have the best intentions ; over and above that, our love needs *guidance*. It is not enough to bring ourselves under the best and most powerful motives, and to have our good intentions made supreme ; we may do mischief enough, after having made all these attainments. It is rather a common thing to see people, of whose christian character and intentions we can entertain no doubt, doing very strange and injurious things. That they mean well, we know. They mean well in the very thing we mourn over ; but that does not prevent the evil thing they do, from acting according to its own evil nature, and being, perhaps, to many, a source of sin and woe. It is not enough that we mean well. Even christian love, with its native capacity for self-guidance, cannot gain the end it aims at, without calling in the aid of a vigorous and well-trained mind. Religious work, above all work, demands high intelligence.

Intelligence becomes thoroughly competent to guide through experience. A young person may have love, as sincere and ardent as one of riper years, but no one expects he should be able to give either the same assistance or the same sympathy. He lacks experience. We may say of love what the poet has said of life ;—

(Love) “is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And cooled in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom
To shape and use.”

There is a great difference between the rude ore of love, and love disciplined by experience ; as much as between the watch spring and the piece of rude ore from which it has been wrought. Love needs experience to make it perfect, and to fit it for its severe and delicate service in this world of sin and sorrow. Yet, however needful it may be, it may

seem strange to make it a matter of exhortation. It may seem to some, like exhorting to old age and hoar hairs. We shall get experience as we grow older. I am not quite sure of that. A long and eventful life does not always produce a rich inward experience. We connect experience far too much with outward events. Events are, indeed, things of power; they are God's adaptation of the truth to present need. But there is no necessary connexion between the occurrence of outward events and the growth of experience. We are so much dependent upon outward events, because we are at so little pains to cultivate direct acquaintance with divine truth; we may get the truth, and get it thoroughly; get large experience of it, and get consequent fitness for God's work, without knowing much of the excitement of outward events. Our acquisitions of experience, and our fitness for the work to which christian love prompts us, depend far more upon the movements of the world within, than upon the events of the world without. Now, the world has need of christian love, in this, its highest state, disciplined and mellowed by experience; such love, alone, can well attempt the work that needs to be done. Such was the love of our great Master.—May ours be like his!

IV. CHRISTIAN LOVE ASSUMES, AS ITS GREAT WORK, THE IMPARTATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH. The first great outburst of christian love was in connexion with the beliefs of mankind. Apostolic men sought to change the beliefs of the world, and thought no endurance and no sacrifice too much to gain their end. Everything might be done, as it seemed to them, for such an end. Their kindness, indeed, took other forms, and concerned itself with other objects, for a great purpose always gives rise to many lesser and subordinate purposes; but there is no exaggeration in saying that early christian love, in imitation of the love of the great master, entered the region of belief and found its chief work there. It is a spiritual thing in its nature, and its work must be spiritual. Sometimes it is deemed unpractical and visionary,

and not the thing the world needs, because it thus connects itself with our beliefs. Whatever we may think of it, there can be no doubt of the fact. It is so in our time ; witness our churches, societies, &c. It might not be unwise for the student of history carefully to mark the periods when it forsook this, its high calling, and concerned itself chiefly with poverty and distress. We must have a word or two immediately on its connexion with these, but it must have lost its high character ere these could become its chief object.

So much for the fact. What of its meaning? Simply, that christian love is the highest kind of love, and lays hold of the *man* himself, contemplates him in the highest aspects of his being, and seeks to give him all the succour he needs, as a man. Christian love alone—the love that Christ has infused into human hearts, recognizes the worth and greatness of the human soul. We never know our greatness till we have listened to its appeals. That it may serve us, it first *seeks* truth, that it may have something to give. Having found the truth, it will *defend* it against all comers. Its chief work, however, lies in *imparting* it ; perhaps, it lies a step further on still ; not so much in conveying information, as in *awakening interest* in what is already known.

Now, christian love is not the only principle at work in this field, nor have God's people always been actuated by it alone. The purest principles and basest passions have met together here. Heaven and hell are in deadly strife upon this battle-field. It is the battle-field of humanity. The fact, that the most malignant passions have been developed in connexion with the propagation of belief, is no intimation that christian love has mistaken its work, and must turn elsewhere. This rousing of all the principles of our nature, the best and the worst, rather intimates that whatever, and whoever, gains the faith of the world, shall have all the rest. Christian love has chosen the right work in laying hold of God's truth, to give it to the world ; that is what poor sinful men need ; all else will follow that. It only

remains while striving for this great object, we *do* work from christian love, and work with our might—while life lasts.

V. CHRISTIAN LOVE EMBRACES EVERYTHING, AND MAKES ALL SUBSERVIENT TO ITS MAIN WORK. Only a hint or two here. Nothing is foreign to it that belongs to man; it has something of a God-like nature in it; while set upon the highest objects, it takes care of the least. It adds something to the care of the poor. Through temporal aid it seeks to impart moral quickening. It is not an easy work. How many charities fail in it. But it tries it. In all the forms of sorrow too, christian sympathy seeks its end. It is quite natural to do so. What more natural, in trouble, than to suggest one of the “exceeding great and precious promises” with which we are endowed? It is not easy to make all forms of sympathy and aid, means of spiritual service; but christian love attempts it.

This great principle demands, and will reward, the most intelligent and thorough cultivation. We stand in need of it; our families and churches languish for want of it; through the acquisition of it, christian people will acquire power, and become masters of the world.

JOHN PILLANS.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SIXTEENTH SECTION.—*Matt.* vii. 7—14.

True Prayer, Social Morality, and Christ's Vision of Life.

THESE verses contain the various subjects stated at the head of this paper. Although each subject has suggested thoughts, the full representation of which would occupy more space than we have at our command, we feel that we must bring them all within the narrow limits which we usually allot to this section of our work. Indeed, were we to dilate on each subject contained in a short passage, we should require more than double the ordinary term of human life to go even through the gospel we have taken in hand. The memory, therefore, of "life's fleetness" must quicken our speed, and restrain us from all unnecessary words and irrelevant thoughts.

TRUE PRAYER.

This subject you have in the first five verses of this paragraph; and they contain three ideas concerning true prayer:—

I. THAT IT IS AN EARNEST APPLICATION OF SOUL TO GOD. "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened," &c. Here are three words expressive of three different acts used to designate *true* prayer. The one idea conveyed by the whole seems to be, *earnest application to God*. True prayer is not a mere sentiment, nor an emotion, nor a form of words, however scriptural. It is an importunate appeal to heaven, and not a mere occasional and verbal appeal, but a habitual and spiritual one ; it is an all-pervading, and ever-ruling state of mind ;—

"The soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed ;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

There are four things always implied in true prayer :—

First: *An undoubting faith in the existence of God*. To appeal earnestly and habitually to a being in whose personal existence we have no faith, is a mental impossibility. "He that cometh to God must believe that HE is." Can an *Atheist* pray? No. He has no supernatural intellect to take cognizance of him—no supernatural heart to feel for him, and no supernatural hand to help him. To him there is nothing higher than blind, resistless, iron-hearted, *nature*. Would it not be brainless fanaticism to invoke the orbs of heaven, call to the surging waves, or ask the mystic winds for help?

Another thing implied in true prayer is—

Secondly: *An undoubting conviction of the personality of God*. It seems to me as mentally impossible to pray to an infinite *something*, destitute of all *personal* attributes, as it is to pray to *nothing*. If I believe that there is nothing but God, that he is *everything*, the entire aggregation of entities, the sum-total of being, and that I am an integral part of Him, how can I pray? An appeal to the INFINITE IT, may be poetry, but cannot be prayer. The all-theist can no more pray than the no-theist. Vagueness and vacuity are alike unsuited to evoke a praying state of soul.

Another thing implied in true prayer is—

Thirdly : *An undoubting belief in the susceptibility of God to human appeals.* Paul tells us, that he that cometh to God must not only believe that he is, but that he is a REWARDER of all those who diligently seek him. It is manifest that unless a man believe that God attends to prayer, and that he can attain by it what he cannot without, he will never truly pray. The man who regards God as too great to attend to the individual concerns of his creatures, and as having established such a system of laws for the government of the universe as to admit of no such interpositions as are involved in the doctrine of “answers to prayer,” can never pray. The *Deist*, therefore, can no more pray, than either the *Atheist* or *Pantheist*.

Another thing implied in true prayer is—

Fourthly : *An undoubting consciousness of our dependence upon God.* Unless a man feels his need, he can never be in earnest for the necessary supply. A profound and ever-prevailing sense of our need of divine help must ever lie at the foundation of all true prayer. Dependence upon God, as a doctrine, is common ; no one who believes in a God, could question it for a moment ; but as a conscious practical feeling, how very rare ! And hence true prayer is rare, even where true theology prevails.

But there is one more thing implied in true prayer, and that is—

Fifthly : *An undoubting faith in the mediation of Christ.* Christ is man’s medium of approach to God. “No man can come unto the Father,” says he, “but by me.” Now, we say, that these five things must be *deep settled convictions* before there can be true prayer. Where they are still the subjects of debate and discussion—mere ideas of the intellect rather than vital impulses in the heart—you cannot have true prayer. Alas ! they are generally nothing more than ideas in churches still, and hence we have but little real prayer.

Another thing in this passage concerning true prayer is—

II. THAT IT IS THE DIVINE CONDITION OF GOOD THINGS. What does prayer obtain? "Good things." LUKE puts for the "good things," "the holy spirit:" and do not the fertile suggestions, the directing and disciplinary influences, and the safe guardianship of the Holy Spirit comprehend all "good things"? All men agree in desiring good things, but they differ widely in their opinion of what things are good. Some indeed, "call evil good," and strive for it as an end. What then are the good things obtained through prayer?

First : *They are things of a spiritual character.* Prayer is a means of obtaining *a sense of God's favour.* On all prayerless spirits there rests, at times, the sense of divine disapprobation. This hangs like a dark thunder-cloud over the soul, shutting out the warm life-giving beams of heavenly light. Prayer sweeps that cloud from the horizon, and brings the spirit into contact with the eternal sun. Prayer is a means of *spiritual development.* Our perfect well-being requires the full and harmonious unfolding of our spiritual sympathies and powers. The fruits of the celestial paradise grow out of the hidden germs of our being. Prayer is the necessary condition of this development. Physical exercise is necessary to develop our physical powers; intellectual exercise is necessary to develop our intellectual powers; and religious exercise, the exercise of prayer and praise, is necessary to develop our spiritual powers. As the earth can only send out her germs of life into blade, and flower, and fruit, as it turns its face to the sun; so the soul can only send out its spiritual energies into perfection, as it turns itself in prayer to the eternal fountain of life and light. Prayer is the power that *raises us above the world.* Prayerless souls are the creatures of the world; they are as clay in its plastic hands; they are as feathers amidst its shifting winds—as straw upon its flowing streams. Prayer lifts them from this degradation, gives them the pinions of an eagle to battle with tempests, penetrate clouds, and bask in calm and sunny scenes above. The spirits of holy martyrs have risen from beneath all the antagonistic forces of the world, and

sung triumphantly as they soared heavenward on the wing of prayer. In prayer, man fills his mind with the idea of God, and in the idea of God all earthly glories pale their light ; and the universe itself seems to fade into a shadow. We link ourselves to omnipotence and grow defiant of all other forces in prayer.

Secondly : *The good things here spoken of are of a temporal character.* The Bible warrants us to pray for temporal blessings ; for health and food, and in everything to make known our requests to God. It is true that God does not restore health and give food miraculously, as he did of old ; still there is reason to believe that he does it. We do not feel so ready to acknowledge, that God, now, gives temporal good in answer to prayer, as we are to acknowledge that he gives spiritual. There are, perhaps, two reasons for this : one is, that multitudes enjoy temporal good, who never pray at all ; whereas, it is not obvious that any enjoy spiritual good who do not pray ; and the other is, that no temporal good seems to come to any man, however devout or prayerful, but through ordinary and established laws.

Now, I think it would be easy to show, would space permit, that the fact, that temporal good comes, *invariably*, through the ordinary constitution of things ; is no valid objection to the fact, that it comes, sometimes, as the effect of prayer. This we could show, not by the very imaginary hypothesis of Dr. Chalmers, namely, that there may be a mighty chain of causes extending from our immediate sphere of observation up to the throne of the eternal ; and that the Almighty may strike any one of the links which are beyond our view, and thereby work out his purpose through all the succeeding links downward ; and thus the result come to us, apparently, in the ordinary course of nature. This, however beautiful and plausible, is but a conjecture, and, therefore, will not have much weight with a philosophic objector. But we would show the worthlessness of the objection we have stated, by three undoubted FACTS :

(1). *That man's temporal good, as a law, depends upon his*

physical conduct. (2). That his physical conduct is determined by the state of his mind, and (3). that the state of his mind is influenced by prayer.

God could change your temporal condition to-morrow without any show of miracle, by imparting to your mind to day some new idea, or impulse. He could change the temporal condition of England, aye, and of the world, by changing the ideas and impulses of a few men. Your child is ill, he is to all appearance about to end his days; what is to be done? You approach your Maker in earnest prayer, and you entreat him to restore the health and prolong the life of the dear one; but your physician says, restoration is impossible, and would involve a miracle; and, perhaps, as is too often the case, ridicules the idea of praying for such an end. But still, that prayer may succeed, and yet there be no miracle. How? An idea of a certain medicine may come to your mind or to the mind of your physician, the application of which stays the disease, in perfect keeping with all the laws of his constitution. Or, a pestilence rages around you, hundreds are dying on the right hand and on the left; you approach your Maker in earnest prayer, you entreat him to stay the plague and "in wrath to remember mercy;" but you are ridiculed by the scientific materialists, and you are told, perhaps, as the Home Secretary intimated to the devout men of Scotland the other day, that God governs the universe by certain laws, and that one of those laws is, that certain gases floating in the atmosphere, destroy life, and that it is no use to pray, until you remove the causes of this poison. Still, plausible as all this is, your prayer for the staying of the plague may be answered. Through it, God may give to you or others, a correct idea of *what* that pestilential poison is and *how* it may be destroyed, and also an impulse to apply the adapted means. And thus, by your prayer, you may terminate pestilence without the show of a miracle.

The other thing contained in these words concerning true prayer is—

III. THAT IT IS EVER EFFECTIVE IN ITS AIM. "Or what man is there of you whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone, or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent?" "If ye then, being evil," &c., 9-11. All expositors agree in regarding the *ἄνθρωπος*-man, here, as emphatical. What *man* is there, to whatever country he may belong, whatever the colour of his skin, the nature of his creed, the measure of his civilization, if he possess the common attributes of our nature, will he, "if his son ask bread, give him a stone?" &c. The argument for the effectiveness of true prayer is most simple and telling; it is a *minori ad majus*, ascending from the affection of an imperfect earthly father towards his imploring child—to the love of the Heavenly Father towards his praying children. The position implied in these words is, that there is far greater reason to expect that God will answer the prayer of the true suppliant, than that an earthly father will attend to the earnest entreaties of his child. Let us seek, by two or three remarks, to illustrate this argument.

First: *That there is no comparison between the amount of affection and ability of an earthly father, and that of the "Heavenly" one.* The affection possessed by a human father towards his indigent and suppliant offspring, however strong, is limited, and liable to extinction. Children often wear it out. And then, the ability to help is very measured. Some parents, alas! have not the power to help their children, even to bread. But, neither the affection nor the ability of the Heavenly Father, admits of any degrees; both are infinite. Redemption proves the infinitude of his love, and nature the infinitude both of his love and his power.

Secondly: *That this little affection and ability of the earthly father, are both derived from the Heavenly one.* Whence came the love that glows in our hearts for our children? It is but a spark emitted from that infinite flame, which lights up the universe. All the love in all creature hearts, is but a little stream rising from the immeasurable depths of divine affection. Whence too came the power to help? "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

Thirdly: *That in the earthly parent, this little and derived affection and ability are associated with "evil;" in the "Heavenly Father," infinite love and ability are associated with absolute goodness.* The earthly parent, sometimes, gets his heart hardened against his child by selfishness, intemperance, worldliness, misinterpretation, &c. But the heart of this infinite father is eternally unsusceptible of any evil influences. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee," saith God.

These thoughts serve, we think, to illustrate the force of the argument contained in the passage, "If ye, then, being evil," &c.

SOCIAL MORALITY.

This subject you have in the twelfth verse, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." There is no obvious connection between this verse and the preceding passage. Here is the normal law, the golden rule, one which, for ages, has been trodden beneath the feet of humanity, but whose enthronement is necessary to the world's weal.

The words suggest two remarks concerning social morality.

I. THAT ITS NORMAL PRINCIPLE IS INTELLIGIBLE, REASONABLE, AND WHOLESOME. Is it not *intelligible*? The most simple and illiterate can understand it; it requires no exposition, no study; a wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein. Is it not *reasonable*? Have not others the same fundamental relations and rights as ourselves? Are not all the offspring of the same common stock, subjects of the same divine administration, co-sojourners on the same earth, and candidates for the same eternity? Therefore, Ought we to do anything to them, that we would not they should do to

us? Is it not *wholesome*? This law condemns *falsehood, dishonesty, cruelty, craft, bloodshed and war*, and all the social evils under which humanity has been groaning for ages. Men's departure from this law is their social ruin; their return to it is their only social salvation.

II. THAT ITS INCULCATION AND ENFORCEMENT ARE ONE OF THE CHIEF ENDS OF REVELATION. "For this is the law and the prophets." The meaning is, that it comprehends the essence and substance of the Old Testament.* One great aim of the Bible is, to make man right with his fellow, as well as right with God; and this can only be done by obedience to this golden law. The moral aspect of the Bible has been fearfully overlooked, even by the Christian Church. The church has regarded the Bible, rather as a creed than a code; and hence it has preached the theory of reconciliation with God, and sanctioned war with men; nay, it has sought to maintain its theology by the most flagrant violations of God's normal principle of morality. It will brand the man as a heretic who does not believe in its doctrine of original sin; and canonize him as a sainted hero, who, in some victorious engagement, has violated every principle of that morality which pervades "the law and the prophets." When will the church reverence the *ethics* of the Bible as well as its *theology*?

CHRIST'S VISION OF LIFE.

This vision you have expressed in the language of the thirteenth and fourteenth verses: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

I. THAT HUMAN LIFE HAS TWO, AND BUT TWO MORAL

* Vide Olshausen in loco.

PATHWAYS. The "broad and the narrow way." The diversities which obtain amongst mankind, in their circumstances, constitution, attainments, forms, spheres of action, and lines of pursuit, are well nigh endless. On certain classifying principles it would be easy to arrange them into very numerous and distinct divisions. To the eye of Jesus, however, all appeared in two great journeying classes. He saw all souls flowing in one of two directions. In the march of moral mind, to any conceivable point of business or pleasure, to the most ephemeral thought or transient feeling, there are but two lines—the RIGHT AND THE WRONG—there is no *middle way* for souls to any thing, however trivial. Every thing felt, thought, done, endured, or enjoyed, by a moral being, is moral, and is morally good or bad. This fact (1). makes human life very solemn, and (2). renders the ascertainment of our true character very easy.

From this passage it appears—

II. THAT ALL ON BOTH THESE PATHWAYS ARE PROGRESSING TO DIVERSE, BUT APPROPRIATE ENDS.

First: *All are progressing.* In neither the broad nor the narrow way did Christ see any standing or sitting—all were *going*. There is nothing stationary: the whole universe, mental and material, like an ever-moving machine, has every wheel in action, even the small dust. Nor is anything stationary about moral character; it is ever passing from stage to stage. There are two features in the progress of moral character, whether in goodness or evil, worthy of note. First, *It is individually optional.* The stars, the winds, the waves, can neither modify nor stop their progress. They have no control over the forces which urge them on. Nor can we stay or modify the progress of our bodies to dissolution. We cannot pause a moment in our march to the grave; both asleep and awake we are going. But morally, the progress of the soul is with us, we move or stop it as we please. We can pause in our moral pathway, or retrace our steps, or go faster on. The other feature in the progress of the soul

worthy of note is, secondly, *That it is ever accelerative.* By this I mean, that the longer it continues to move in the line, either of goodness or evil, the more momentum it gathers, and the faster it proceeds. Its progress is not like the progress of the planets or the ocean. The stars do not seem to move quicker now than they did in the days of Adam, nor does the ocean ebb or flow with greater speed. But the progress of the soul in character, is something like the progress of the cascade, it gathers fresh momentum every moment. Hence, a bad man will perpetrate deeds of iniquity to day, the bare idea of which, would have overwhelmed him a short time ago ; and hence, too, a good man will perform now, with ease and happiness, deeds of self-sacrifice, which at the outset of his religious life, he would not venture to attempt.

Secondly: *All are progressing to diverse, but appropriate, ends.* The broad way "leadeth to destruction." The word destruction does not mean *annihilation*, but perdition ; not to the termination of existence, but to the termination of the blessings of existence ; the destruction of everything which makes existence worth having, or even tolerable. The narrow way "leadeth unto life." Life, here, is the antithesis of destruction. It means, not mere existence, but *blessed* existence. The one course, therefore, leads to *ill-being*, and the other course to *well-being*. Now, both these ends, though so *diverse*, are *appropriate* to the course. A life of sin leads, naturally, to this destruction. In every sin there is a throwing away of some portion of the blessings of existence, and man has only to keep on sinning in order to strip himself of everything but *sheer* being. And so of holiness ; holiness leads to life—is life. "To be carnally-minded *is* death, but to be spiritually-minded *is* life and peace." "Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap : he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; he that soweth to the spirit, shall reap everlasting life."

From this passage it appears—

III. THAT THE AVOIDANCE OF THE ONE PATHWAY, AND THE ADOPTION OF THE OTHER, ARE THE IMPERATIVE OBLIGATION OF ALL. Here is the command, "ENTER ye in at the strait gate."

Two things are here suggested :—

First: *That the duty involves great difficulty.* It is a "strait gate." There is no difficulty in entering on the broad road. The gate is wide, you can step easily through. One cause of the difficulty we have here suggested in the *number* pursuing each course; there were many entering the "wide gate," and walking the "broad road," but only a "few" passed through the "strait gate" into the narrow way. Man, as a social being, is wondrously influenced by *numbers*; he will follow the multitudes, as the tides follow the moon. This mighty social force has ever been against holiness in the world. It was especially so in the days of Christ. All the classes in Judea were against the new religion of rectitude and love. He, therefore, who would adopt a religious life, has to extricate himself from the ten thousand ties with which society binds him to itself. He must be *singular*—he must leave the multitude, and walk with the few.

But however difficult, it *must* be done. God commands it, and our eternal well-being depends on it. No man has a right to be in the broad road; every moment he is trampling on the eternal principles of law and order—battling with the moral influences of heaven—violating all the high intuitions of his own nature, and walking under the darkening shadows of that ever-blackening and expanding thunder cloud of retribution, whose elements, if it burst, will

"Beat upon his naked soul
In one eternal storm."

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*The True Soldiership.*

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds ; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”—2 Cor. x. 4-5.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Nineteenth.

WHEN christianity entered the world, it stood in direct and determined antagonism to the maxims, systems, habits, institutions, and spirit of society. In the state-house of senators, in the marts of commerce, in the halls of philosophy, in the temples of religion, and in both the Jewish and Pagan world, it found but little it could sanction ; but much it was bound to censure and destroy. Hence, like the son of the old patriarch, its hand was raised in battle against every man, or at least, against something in every man.

This *fact* is an incidental argument for its heavenly origin. *How could the world produce a system so entirely opposite to itself*:—a system which it sought earnestly to crush at the very outset of its history? No law is more invariable, both in the material and spiritual world, than the law of *like producing like*. But, on the assumption that christianity is earthly in its origin, you have a stupendous infraction of this law. You have grapes springing from thorns, and figs from thistles. There seems to me a greater miracle involved in the idea, that christianity is of earthly origin, than in the idea that it is a system from heaven.

The war element is once more rampant in the world. It seems to surge as tumultuously through the public mind as

it ever did in the darkest and bloodiest epochs of the world's history. The SOLDIER is once more the great man with the multitudes. Your saints, preachers, and missionaries, are nothing, of course ; even your sages, statesmen, and bishops, retire for a time into the shade of obscurity. They consent to be thus eclipsed by martial glory. The *soldier* is on the front of the stage, and the heart of the world is absorbed in his strategies of falsehood and feats of slaughter.

The fact, that war recurs from age to age, and that whenever it recurs it seems to become popular, even amongst the most civilized people, has led many of its advocates, who reason at all on the subject, to conclude that war is a deep instinct in humanity, and, therefore, right in itself. We readily grant the existence of a belligerent element in man's constitution, whilst we would deny that the design of that element was to destroy the existence of his fellows. You may as well argue the rectitude of idolatry from the religious instinct, or the rectitude of falsehood from the poetic instinct, or the rectitude of prying into peoples' private concerns from the philosophic instinct, as to argue the rectitude of war from the belligerent instinct. Has not man other foes to contend with and master, in order to reach his true destiny ? And for these, does he not require this instinct ? Has he not to battle with the elements of nature, in order to turn them to his use ; with his physical propensities, in order to keep them in subjection ; with the ignorance, crimes, diseases, and poverty of society, in order to help his race ? Surely, if he want to develop this instinct, if he want to be brave, and to show himself a true *soldier*—a veritable hero, he need not go and fight with his brother man, either at home or abroad ; he has plenty of the worst of antagonists at his own door ; let him fight them, and the best spirits of his age, his conscience and his God, will call him a "good soldier."

The passage leads us to notice the *weapons and victories of a true soldiery*.

I. THE WEAPONS OF A TRUE SOLDIERSHIP. The apostle states two things concerning these weapons :—

First: *They are not carnal.* The word carnal, here, may be regarded as standing in contradistinction to three things. (1). *To miraculous agency.* Miracles were employed, both by Christ and his apostles, in the cause of truth; they served, if not to prove the doctrines, to draw men's attention to them, and to furnish impressive illustrations of their genius and their tendency. But they were local and temporary, they were never intended to be permanent; indeed, a permanent miraculous agency is a solecism. Miracles, then, though employed at first, are not the regular weapons by which christianity fights her battles. The word "carnal" may stand in contradistinction (2). to all coercive instrumentality. The civil magistrate, now, for fifteen centuries assuming the prerogative of God, has sought by exactions and penalties, to force christianity upon the consciences of men. Such weapons disgrace and mis-represent it, and were proscribed by its founder; who did not cause his voice to be heard in the street, and who never broke the bruised reed, nor quenched the smoking flax. The word "carnal" may stand, moreover, in contradistinction (3). to all crafty inventions. In nothing, perhaps, has the craftiness of men appeared more than in connexion with the profession of extending christianity. I call that craft which, in order to promote the elevation of self, or the influence of a sect, accommodates christianity to the sensuousness, the prejudices, the superstition, and the credulity of mankind. What are the tricks of rhetoric, the assumptions of priests, and the "clap-trap" of sects, but craft?

Secondly: *Though not carnal, they are mighty.* "Mighty through God." (1). They are mighty through God because they are his *productions*. *Gospel truths*, the weapons of which the apostle speaks, are the ideas of God; righteous—loving—remedial ideas—embodied in His Son; and they are the "power of God." The gospel has proved itself the greatest power in the social world, ever pulling down and building up.

(2). They are mighty through God, because they are the *instruments* of God. When we put our ideas in a book, they must work for themselves; so far as we are concerned, we cannot personally accompany them. We know not the thoughts which they awaken in the minds of our readers: and then we die, and must leave them behind. But God goes *with* His ideas and works *by* them. They are "mighty," not through the enactments of law, the force of eloquence, nor the cogency of reasoning; not through imposing rituals nor thrilling music; not through human zeal, however fervid; human sacrifices, however costly; nor human efforts, however adapted and persevering; but **THROUGH GOD**. Gospel truths are mighty as the laws of nature are mighty. Those laws are mighty; they control the fury of the tempest, they direct the lightning, they launch the thunder; every surge of the ocean rises and falls, swells and bursts at their bidding. They bring round the sweet interchange of the seasons with a regularity that knows no deviation. But those laws are mighty *through* God.

II. THE VICTORIES OF A TRUE SOLDIERSHIP. What are the victories?

First: *They are mental*. Paul is speaking about "imagination," and things pertaining to mind. They are not over *body*. There is not much glory in destroying the bodily life of man. The lion, the bear, a poisonous gust of air, will excel man in this. If men are to be honored for killing, why not honor them? But the victories of a true soldiership are over mind. And, indeed, you do not conquer the man, unless you conquer his *mind*. If there be a future world, then the men you slay upon the battle-field, may hate you in the great eternity, with a profounder hatred than ever; and confront you to fight a more terrific battle over again.

Secondly: *They are corrective*. These victories do not involve the destruction of the mind, nor any of its native faculties, but certain evils that pertain to it. What are they? (1). The evil fortifications of the mind. The "pulling

down of strong-holds." The allusion is to the fortresses which defend a city or a nation. Now, the depraved mind has its fortresses; not against evil, this would be right; but against truth and God. What are these? Prejudices, worldly maxims, associations, passions, habits; behind these strong-holds the mind entrenches itself against God. The famed strong-holds of Sebastopol are weak to these, and it requires a far-higher skill and courage to pull down the strong-holds of humanity against God, than to destroy the most invulnerable bulwarks of a nation. (2). The corrupt thinking of the mind. "Casting down imaginations."* In the margin it is "reasoning." The word *thinking*, will comprehend all. For the faculty which we call imagination, thinks as well as the intellect. It is against evil thinkings, therefore, whether of a poetic, a philosophic, or any other character. It is against infidel thinkings, and superstitious thinkings, selfish and dishonest thinkings, vain and sensual thinkings. The *particular* thinkings of the apostle's age ran in the two grooves of Judaism and Paganism. (3). The antitheistic impulses of the mind: "and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." Every feeling and passion that rise against God.

These are the victories of true soldiership. These evils are the *root-evils* of the world; he, therefore, who strikes at these, pursues the best plan to conquer all the evils that afflict humanity.

Thirdly: *They are christian*. They are victories won for Christ. They bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." *Thought* is everything to man. The forms of the universe come to him mirrored by his thoughts; the music of the universe comes to him echoed by his thoughts; the great God comes to him only in the reflections of his thoughts. The million forms of civilisation around us arose from thoughts; they are but thoughts embodied. Out of

* The word *Δογισμὸς*, here rendered imagination, occurs but in one other place in the New Testament, and that is in Rom. ii. 15, where it is rendered "thought."

thought man weaves his web of destiny, cultivates his paradise or kindles his hell; thought is the millstone beneath which he shall sink, or the pinions on which he shall rise, for ever. Now, the work of the true soldier is to bring this fontal force into an entire subjection to Christ—to make all men like Christ; and then, what a world will this be!

This is the soldiership, my brother, we advocate. A soldiership, whose inspiration is good-will to man and glory to God; which strikes the serpent of evil on the head, and around whose brow there shall bloom the fadeless laurels of higher and purer worlds.

“They err, who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide; to overrun
Large countries; and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault.”—*Milton*.

SUBJECT:—*Phases of Redemptive Truth.*

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”—James i. 25.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twentieth.

THIS verse leads us to look at Christianity in three aspects: as a system to be profoundly studied, a law to be obeyed, a blessing to be enjoyed. We shall look at it—

I. AS A SYSTEM TO BE PROFOUNDLY STUDIED. “But whoso looketh into,” &c. The word *παρακίψας*, here translated, “looketh,” implies the effort of bending. Thus it is used in Luke xxiv. 12.; John xx. 5.; and 1 Peter i. 12. It is used in these places to express the earnest and anxious effort of the apostles in looking into the sepulchre in search of their risen Lord; and to express the intellectual attitude of angelic spirits in enquiring into the wonders of redemption. But why should it be profoundly studied?

First: *Because its subjects have the highest claims to intellectual investigation.* There are two principles by which we estimate the claims of a subject to our investigation; (1). its *inherent grandeur*, and (2). its *relative importance*. But where are subjects to be found in *either* of these respects, equal to those contained in the gospel? Can any subjects be more *inherently* glorious than those which disclose the nature, works, government, ideas, feelings, and heart, of the great God?—Or more *relatively* important than those which refer to the salvation of souls from error and misery; and their progress in truth, virtue, and blessedness, for evermore?

Secondly: *Because its method of revealing its subjects, requires intellectual investigation.* Its subjects, are not placed in their true historical, philosophical, or logical, relations. There is no system in the book. In this respect, it is analagous to nature. Nature does not reveal to man the doctrines of astronomy, or botany, or geology; all it does, is to supply him with the materials; it gives him stars, and trees, and fossils, and leaves him to find out their science. It is so in relation to the Bible; if it is to be properly understood, its objects must be as diligently observed, compared, and classified, as are the facts of nature by the philosopher.

Thirdly: *Because its blessed effects upon the heart can only be realized by intellectual investigation.* No truth really benefits the heart that does not come to the mind with the power of *conviction*;—a mere impression made by its sound or form soon passes away. But conviction implies the searching for evidence. You must “search the scriptures,” if you would find “eternal life.”

Let us, therefore, look into this system, not as we look into the mirror, just for a moment, and lose the impression of our features and expression; but “continue therein,” and not be “forgetful hearers.”

Let us look at the gospel:—

II. AS A LAW TO BE CONTINUALLY OBEYED. The gospel

is here called a "law." A law is a rule of action: in this sense, all things and beings have their law—earth, air, ocean, trees, stars, man, angels, God—all have some principle that guides them in their action, and this principle is their law. There are three things implied in a law; *authority*, *publicity*, and *power of obedience*. This law has the highest authority; is widely published; and all who hear it have the power to obey;—otherwise, it would be no "law." The "law" of the gospel consists of two elements: the *evangelical* and the *moral*; the first involving "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" and the second, love to our neighbour and our God.

There are two things said of this law:—

First: *That it is "perfect."* "The perfect law." Mankind have many laws, but this is the *perfect* law. Human laws are imperfect; the history of modern legislation is little more than a repealing of bad laws. But this law admits of no change; it is perfect. Who can suggest an improvement of either its evangelical or moral element?

Secondly: *That it is "liberty."* "Perfect law of liberty." It is sometimes called the "law of righteousness," the "law of the spirit," the "law of life." But here it is called the "law of liberty." It is called the "law of liberty," because it invests man with true "liberty." But what is liberty? It is the enjoyment of all rights. What are these rights? Accuracy of knowledge, purity of heart, clearness of conscience, brightness of prospects, friendship and communion with God. But these man has forfeited through sin. The design and office of Christianity are to restore him to all these blessed *fruits* of the "tree of life." It is one thing to have these rights, and another thing to enjoy them. True liberty is the enjoyment of rights; it is power—power to think without prejudice, to love without impurity, to act without selfishness, to look to the future without dread, to approach God without fear.

Now, this gospel is a law to be continually obeyed. It is not a system for speculative study and controversial dis-

cussion; but a law, to be wrought out in our life: not a law to be followed on the sabbath day merely, but to be practised everywhere and at all times.

Let us look at this gospel—

III. AS A BLESSING TO BE NOW ENJOYED. “This man shall be blessed in his deed.” He is blessed, not in his *ideas*, nor *sentiments*, nor *talk*, but in his deeds; not for deeds in some *future* state, but in his deeds *now*. Man’s destiny is action; and the gospel only truly benefits him, as it becomes embodied in his every-day life;—the spirit and inspiration of every deed. Inaction is stupor—wrong action is misery—right action is bliss; and right action, in man, is the fruit of the gospel.

SUBJECT :—*The Eras of Redemption.*

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his foot-stool.”—Heb. x. 12-13.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-first.

WE have *two revelations from God; nature, and the Bible*. Between these revelations there is a remarkable agreement. Discrepancies are no where found but in the captious strictures of infidelity. The only difference is in the *degree* of discovery: the Bible goes farther. It assumes what nature teaches, and proceeds to unfold a being, a scheme, and a system of doctrines and duties, of which nature whispers not a syllable.

This Bible is made up of two parts, *Judaism and Christianity*; but they constitute but *one* system—one in principle, authorship, and design; christianity is but the *full* unfoldment of Judaism, the germ advanced to the fruit,

the twilight brightened into noon, the architectural plan ("shadow") elaborated into a magnificent temple.

This passage leads us to look at the *past, present, and future, of Christ's redemptive history.*

I. THE PAST ERA OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE HISTORY. He *has* "offered one sacrifice for sins." This is the *great fact* in his past life. The expression conveys three thoughts:—

First: *That Christ's death was a self-immolation.* He "offered." He was the *priest* as well as the victim. The fact that he offered *himself*, intimates, (1). *His self-propriatorship.* Had he not been his own proprietor, he could have had no right to sacrifice *himself*. In a mere creature, the act would have been the sin of *suicide.* *But he was his own.* "I have power to lay down my life," &c. The fact that he offered *himself*, intimates, (2). *His unexampled philanthropy.* Had he given a world for our ransom, what would it have been to the gift of himself? He loved us, and gave *himself* for us. "Greater love hath no man than this," &c.

Another thought which this expression conveys is:—

Secondly: *That his death was a self-immolation for sin.* One "sacrifice for sins." There are three very erroneous views of Christ's death: one is, that he died to prove the truth of his doctrine; another, that he died to appease the wrath of God; and the other, that he died to purchase a certain number of souls. In relation to the first, we have only to remark, that the death of a teacher may prove his own *sincerity*, but not his doctrines. Error has its martyrs as well as truth. In relation to the second, that it is an inversion of the scriptural doctrine, that God's love was the cause of Christ's mission; and in relation to the third, that it is repugnant alike to every just idea of God, and to every right interpretation of scripture on the subject. In opposition to all, the text tells us, that it was *FOR SINS.* He died to *put away sin*: to put it away in its *guilt-form*—in its *idea-form*—and in its *habit-form.*

Another thought which this expression conveys is:—

Thirdly : *That his death was a self-immolation for sin unrepeatable.* "One sacrifice for sin for ever."* The priests under the law offered day after day, and year after year. But this one sacrifice of Christ was sufficient for all lands and ages.

II. THE PRESENT ERA OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE HISTORY.
He is sitting down on the right-hand of God.

First: *This position indicates rest.* He has finished the work that was given him to do. He has left the stormy world, and is beyond the reach of foes. Yonder, in that sinless, cloudless, stormless, world, he enjoys unbroken peace : no tempest ripples the deep current of his heart : eternal calmness has settled on his brow.

Secondly : *This position indicates honor.* To be placed on the right-hand of sovereigns is expressive of the highest dignity. Christ is now exalted over all. All power is given unto him. Cherubic legions guard His throne, and seraphs fly at His command. The head that once was crowned with thorns, is crowned with glory now.

III. THE FUTURE ERA OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE HISTORY.
"From henceforth expecting," &c. Some suppose that the allusion is, here, to the conduct of Joshua.—Josh. x. 24.

First : *Christ has enemies* : fallen angels and sinful men.

Secondly : These enemies He will subjugate—make them his footstool. Some will be subdued by *the moral influences of His truth and love* ; and some, by the *resistless might of his retributive justice*. To the former, we think Christ here refers. The human world will, one day, be subject to him : all minds will, one day, bow to his influence, as the ripe fields of autumn to the winds of heaven. Christ *expects* it : it is therefore, certain. The subject teaches—

First : *The repugnance with which humanity should regard sin.* Christ came into the world to put it away—died and lives again to put it away. Christ, God, and His universe, are against sin.

* The critical reader will observe that we adopt Knapp's punctuation of the text.

Secondly: *The true test by which we may determine the worth of our christianity.* What is it? Not the accuracy of our theological ideas, nor the outward propriety of our conduct, but the absence of sin. Christ died to put it away; unless ours is being put away, our "religion is vain."

Thirdly: *The certainty of christianity's ultimate triumph.* Christ "expects" it. Disappointment implies *ignorance* and *weakness*. A being who knows all the future, and whose arm is almighty, *can* never be disappointed.

Fourthly: *The absurdity of waiting for any farther helps to conversion.* Christ has put into operation a certain system of instrumentality to convert men, and upon that he expects his conquests. What reason have you to wait for something more? All that you want is with you now; all that you will ever have is with you now. If you yield not to these genial influences, you will have to bow to his power. Why oppose him?—Has he *wronged* you? Why oppose him?—Can you succeed *against* him? Can you quench the flaming lightnings, or roll back the thunderbolts, of His justice?

SUBJECT:—*The First Scene in the Moral History of Redeemed Humanity.*

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon," &c.—Rev. xx. 1-2.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-second.

No inspired book presents a greater scope for visionary and idle speculation, than this apocalypsc. Here every imagination has the widest sweep for its wildest evolutions. Hence we have, almost, as many interpretations of its contents, as we have expositors. One can scarcely pursue a more easy or certain path to popularity, than by propounding some ingenious exegesis of this book.

We intend going through the whole of this chapter and the first four verses of the succeeding one, in *five analyses of homilies*; because we think we discover there, what seems admirably adapted for deep and practical moral impression. The nineteen verses appear to us, a map of *the moral history of humanity*. They disclose no less than FIVE moral scenes through which the redeemed portion of our race is to pass; namely:—*the scene of moral struggle—the scene of moral triumph—the scene of moral reaction—the scene of an awful retribution, and the scene of the final destiny of the good.*

The first, the scene of moral struggle, is the one unfolded in the first two verses we have read; and to which we shall now give our attention.

This scene shows us two things:—

I. THAT REDEEMED HUMANITY HAS A FEARFUL ANTAGONIST TO CONTEND WITH. This enemy is called “dragon,” “serpent,” “devil,” “satan.”

This highly symbolic language, applied to the great antagonist of the good, implies three things:—

First: *The actual existence of such an enemy.* The names “dragon,” “serpent,” &c., must stand for *something*. They are the names of *real* beings, and cannot be supposed as used to designate the mere phantoms of the imagination. Most conclusive arguments for the existence of some mighty agent of evil, whose influence is world-wide, may be drawn from three considerations: (1). The universal belief of humanity. (2). The opposite classes of moral phenomena. In the world you have error, selfishness, infidelity, and misery; and truth, benevolence, religion, and happiness. Can these be branches from the same root? Or streams from the same font? (3). The general teaching of the Bible.

The language implies:—

Secondly: *The personality of such an enemy.* These are names of creatures having *individual* existence and attributes. The Bible always speaks of this *evil existent* as a PERSON. It

is far too great a demand upon our credulity to believe that the various inspired writers, from Moses to John, extending over a period of two thousand years, possessing various idiosyncracies and attainments, and living under different economies, governments, and circumstances, could all fall into the common habit of speaking of evil as a person, if it were only a principle. This, I say, is too much for our faith. Moreover, *An evil principle implies an evil person.* Sin is not some mysterious entity, separate from moral existence. Is sin an *act*? Then it must have an agent. Is it a *motive*? *Motive* implies thought, and thought implies a thinker.

The language implies:—

Thirdly: *The characteristics of such an enemy.* “Dragon” stands as the emblem of *power*. Probably the Leviathan described in Job xli. is of the same class. “Shall not one be cast down, even at the sight of him?” “Serpent” stands as the emblem of *cunning* and *venom*. “Devil” means *accuser*. “Satan” signifies *opposer*.

This adversary of redeemed humanity, then, is *mighty, crafty, and virulent*. The New Testament is full of the doctrine that this being is the determined foe of humanity: * Matt. iv. 10. xii. 26. Mark iv. 15. Luke x. 18. xxii. 3, 31. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xi. 14. Rev. ii 13. xii. 9.

The text teaches:—

II. THAT HEAVEN HAS VOUCHSAFED AN AGENCY, WHICH IS DESTINED TO MASTER THE ADVERSARY. “And I saw an angel come down from heaven; having the key of the bottomless pit,” &c. Who is this angel that descends from heaven? The word angel, both in Hebrew and Geek, means *messenger*. It is applied to impersonal, as well as personal agents; and

* For illustrations of this subject, see Scott’s Congregational Lectures; and articles under the word “Dragon,” “Serpent,” and “Satan,” in the Biblical Cyclopædia.

it is applied to evil, as well as good, personal agents. It is evidently used here to designate some *good* personal agent ; for he descends from heaven, and descends from heaven to do battle with evil. The language applies *pre-eminently* to Christ, but refers also to every *true religious teacher*. Let the word angel here, then, stand for every true religious teacher,—including Christ and all his true servants ; and we shall get a most clear and practical meaning from the passage.

We have here two things about this *true teacher*—this angel:—

First: *His authority*. He has the “key” of the bottomless pit. A key is the emblem of authority. Christ is said to have the keys of death and hell at his girdle ; and to his servant Peter he gave the “keys” of the kingdom—the authority to open the kingdom of truth, by true teaching, to Jew and Gentile.* Every man who has the true *spirit* and *power* of a teacher, has the “key” or the authority to teach. He has a right to do battle with the enemy wherever he is found ; whether in literature or commerce, churches or governments, theories or practices. A true man has heaven’s key in his hand for this work.

Secondly: *His instrumentality*. What is the instrument employed? “A chain.” What is the chain? Iron, brass, adamant? No! No! These cannot fetter intellect—these cannot manacle soul. Nothing can curb, or restrain, the influence of Satan but *christian truth*. What is meant by binding Satan? It does not mean the binding of his *being* or *faculties*, but the binding of his *influence*. He is to be bound, in the sense of limiting his sway, by closing up human hearts against him. As liberty binds the influence of slavery ; intelligence, the influence of ignorance ; and religion, the influence of infidelity ; so, christian truth is to bind the influence of Satan. Every truth, my brother, is a

* See “Core of Creeds :” being an Exposition of Christ’s words to Peter.

link in that mighty chain. The chain of christian teaching is far too weak, and short, at present, to restrain the force or measure the dimensions of satanic influence.

This is the scene through which we are passing. All is battle *now*. For the subjugation of the common foe, let each forge some holy thought-link for the all-enfettering chain.

SUBJECT:—*The Five Brethren; or, a Terrible Picture of Domestic Life.*

"Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren," &c.—Luke xvi. 27-28.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-third.

Here is a picture drawn by an infallible hand, whose pencil is dipped in truth and guided by unerring skill. In this picture there are three groups of objects:—

First: *A poor man rising from his poverty to heaven.* You see him here a bruised, suffering pauper, lying at the door of a rich man; and yonder, a happy spirit, in the very bosom of Abraham.

Secondly: *A rich man sinking from his opulence to hell.* Here you see the rich man faring sumptuously every day, and robed in splendour; yonder, you see him in the depths of misery, crying in vain for a drop of water.

Thirdly: *A large family on the path to endless ruin.* "I have five brethren," &c.

The two verses before us lead us to mark, especially, the prominent features of this family picture.

I. IT WAS A FAMILY OF GREAT SECULAR RESPECTABILITY. It stood far above the ordinary condition of men. These "brethren," perhaps, could point to their large estates, and refer to a long line of noble ancestry; but they are on the path of ruin.

This teaches—

First: *That wealth is no evidence of divine approbation.* In all ages people have been tempted to think so: Asaph, Job, Scribes and Pharisees.

Secondly: *That wealth has no necessary tendency to promote virtue.* Some people think, that if they had wealth they would be very good. Wealth *may* and *ought* to be the means of virtue. True, it enables a man to procure *books, leisure, facilities for meditation, means of usefulness,* and thereby increases his obligation to be religious and useful: but he may, and often does, turn it to an opposite account.

II. IT WAS A FAMILY THAT HAD BEEN VISITED BY BE-REAVEMENT. One brother had just died, and was “buried.”

This shows:—

First: *That death is not to be bribed away by wealth.* He enters the palace as well as the cottage.

Secondly: *That death does not wait for moral preparation.* The brother who died was not prepared.

Thirdly: *That death often fails to produce the proper influence upon the survivors.* Though their brother had died, it would seem that they were still pursuing their downward course.

III. IT WAS A FAMILY, ONE OF WHOSE NUMBER WAS IN HELL. “In hell he lifted up his eyes, being tormented.” Perhaps, the torments of their wretched brother might be expressed in two words—**FELT CONTRASTS.**

First: *A felt contrast between what he was, and what he had been.* In his “life-time,” he possessed “good things”—had every comfort and luxury: but now is deprived of all but sheer existence—not a “drop of water.”

Secondly: *A felt contrast between what he was, and what he might have been.* “He seeth Abraham a-far off and Lazarus in his bosom.” He might have been in that bosom. But where was he?

Thirdly: *A felt contrast between what he was, and what he*

ought to have been. He ought to have been holier than Lazarus, for his privileges were greater; but he was most corrupt and vile. How wretched the thought of having a brother in such "torments."

IV. IT WAS A FAMILY WHOSE MORAL CONDITION ROUSED THE APPREHENSIONS OF THEIR TORMENTED BROTHER. "I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house," &c. Whatever might have been the feeling that dictated this prayer, two things are taught by it:—

First: *That departed spirits convey with them the remembrance of their earthly history.* He remembered his "father's house;"—the scenes of his first impressions. Our earthly companions, possessions, opportunities, blessings, and sins, we shall never forget.

Secondly: *That hell is no desirable place for the renewal of old associations.* This is not the language of nature: nature longs for the renewal of old companionships. *Sin dissocializes human nature.*

V. THAT IT WAS A FAMILY POSSESSING ALL THE RELIGIOUS ADVANTAGES THEY WOULD EVER HAVE. They had Moses and the prophets. They had, not only the teachings of *nature*, but those of a *special* revelation. This revelation was full enough for their *capacity*—for their *responsibility*—for their *condition*.

SUBJECT:—*The Individual and Social Influence of Religion.*

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."—1 Peter i. 22.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-fourth.

THAT religion which is indifferent to the social elements of man, is most destructive of his happiness, and injurious to

his influence. The christian religion clearly identifies God the Creator, and God the Redeemer, by the respect it pays to these elements. God, in offering salvation to man, never contradicts his own laws. The religion of Christ works a great change in man, in relation to his sins, but not to his faculties and social elements. *Man* has an open entrance through the narrow gate, but the *sinner* finds it difficult.

This passage leads us to consider :—

I. THE INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE OF RELIGION. “Ye have purified your souls.” This implies, that personal corruption is an obstacle to beneficial influence over society, and that, in order to benefit others, we must become pure ourselves first. Let our intellectual attainments be ever so high, and our social feelings ever so amiable, we shall be of no benefit to ourselves or to society, until this great change is wrought in us. This purifying process is brought about :—

First: *By the influence of “the truth.”* Sanctify them through thy truth. “*Thy word is truth.*” The word of God is like the sun, shewing everything in its true color; and its whole tendency is to purify the heart, by opposing all evil, and promoting all good. Secondly: *By the influence of the spirit.*—“Through the spirit.” He is called the *Holy Spirit*, because of his cleansing and purifying influences on the heart. It is the Holy Spirit alone that can purify our sentiments, affections, hopes, desires, plans, and purposes. Thirdly: *By the influence of obedience.*—“In obeying.” This combines the work of man in union with the “truth” and spirit of God, in the purification of his heart.

II. THE SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF RELIGION. “Ye have purified your souls . . . unto unfeigned love of the brethren.” The spirit of love is essential to the welfare of every society. There is no unfeigned love of the brethren, but from the purified soul.

First: *The spirit of selfishness is obliterated from the purified soul.* Selfishness will split every union, poison every cup,

and raise Iscariots in every society. When this is effaced, we have faith in the future prosperity of society. Secondly: *The purified soul is God-like in its nature and influence.* "Be holy, for I am holy." "God is love." Thirdly: *The feelings of the purified soul are always loving and compassionate.* Good feelings are as essential to the happiness of society, as correct opinions and orthodox sentiments.

H. E. THOMAS.

SUBJECT:—*Paul and Barnabas: their Contention and Separation.*

"And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren, in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do; and Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark," &c.—Acts xv. 36-43.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-fifth.

SYMPATHY is the life of union. Similarity of intellectual preference will lead to fraternal concert. The church is only powerful in proportion as it is bounded and swayed by the omnipotence of love. The planet rushes from its orbit when the equilibrium is destroyed. Correctly balanced and harmonized, the church revolves around its divine sun, receiving heat, light, and splendour, from its bosom; it revolves, also, upon its own axis, presenting all its phases to the eye of day; but, alter the centre of gravity, and the church returns to darkness, confusion, and death. So is it with the internal organization of spiritual brotherhood. Misunderstanding, suspicion, or rivalry, arises, and at once the peaceful revolution of the church is impeded or destroyed. Voluntary associations of humanity require the intermingling of firmness, suavity, and intelligence; or progress is rendered an impossibility.

In the case before us, confusion was created by the wish to introduce a foreign and uncongenial element into apostolic union. In a moment the result was manifest; the power of adhesiveness was diminished; there was revulsion, strife, separation.*

On the entire passage, take the following hints:—

I. THE APOSTLES WERE NOT GOING FORTH AS THE DELEGATES OF A SUPREME, CENTRAL, LEGISLATIVE, ASSEMBLY. The churches were self-existing—independent. (1). There was *union* between the churches, but that was purely *spiritual*. Any other union is cold, mutable, and secular. (2). The visit was perfectly *natural*. Great labor had been expended. The little saplings had been planted amid tears, tortures, blood, &c. (3). A second visit of the apostles was calculated to shew, that they were not ashamed of their principles, nor afraid of their opponents, &c. (4). A young struggling church is encouraged by the sympathy, and counsel, of wise and experienced christians, &c.

II. STABILITY OF CHARACTER WAS NECESSARY TO USEFULNESS IN SUCH MISSION. (Verses 37, 38.) The man who has failed once, may fail again. He must be tried in less responsible circumstances before he is elevated to such a dignity. If he has committed himself by his cowardice, he must prove his manhood by subsequent courage. (1). *Friendship* is no reason, in itself, why a man should be promoted to office. Remember, that John Mark was the *nephew* of Barnabas. Piety, worth, intelligence, are the only qualifications

*I am perfectly aware that ἐγένετο οὖν παροξυσμός, does not necessarily imply that *malignity* or *ill-will* existed between the two apostles; and also, that the word παροξυσμός, is often employed by inspired writers and classical authors in a *good* sense: yet I do not imagine that the term in this connexion conveys the idea that Paul and Barnabas were influenced by the best of feelings. The entire context contradicts this view. The incident does not depend for a character on mere verbal criticism; it is susceptible of a broader and more intelligent exposition.

that should be recognized in God's church. (2). *Fickle* men are not to be trusted in the service of truth, when there is *difficulty* in the way. John deserted the apostles, and would not go to Pamphylia to brave the dangers common to all.

III. DIFFERENCES IN OPINION SHOULD NOT LEAD TO THE ABANDONMENT OF PRINCIPLE. (1). Some wreak their vengeance on the *cause of truth*. (2). When two men cannot agree to toil in the same corner of the vineyard, let them honestly divide, and betake themselves to other departments. (3). "The best of men are but men at best." The holiest men may have their tempers ruffled sometimes. "Be ye angry, and sin not." (4). The apostle received John into fellowship, in after years. "Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me in the ministry." (2 Tim. iv. 11.) The errors of youth should not be perpetually visited on a man's head. Age brings penitence, and penitence leads to reformation. "To err is human—to forgive divine!"

Brother, be admonished! Differ *from*, but not *with* thy fellow servants. Avow conviction, but employ the accent of love. Change thy colleagues, but thy master change not. There is only time to combat the adversary: there is none to wound or exasperate thy brother. (Col. iii. 12-14.)

JOSEPH PARKER.

SUBJECT:—*The Present God.*

"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."—Jer. xxiii. 24.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-sixth.

VERY note-worthy are these words. The language is sublime; still more sublime are the truths which the words convey. Three interrogations are here proposed; but these questions do not imply doubt, nor ask for information, but

are intended to assert and confirm the truths which are implied in them. The questions are three, and the truths asserted are three.

First: The wonderful fact of God's *omnipresence* is here asserted. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God *afar off*?" No! God *is* near at hand, and He *is* present afar off. He is present with every creature, in every scene, of every world, in every moment of time. We can no more escape from the circle of God's presence, than from our own souls. How well the ancient sage exclaimed, "His centre is everywhere, His circumference nowhere!"

Secondly: Another truth which the text asserts is, the *omniscience* of God. "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord." There are *no* secret places to God. The deep valley is to him as the lofty mountain; the abysses of the ocean are as visible to Him as the surface of the earth. What Hagar said in the desert, every creature, in every world, at all times, may truthfully say: "Thou God, seest me." "He searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men." "All things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do."

Thirdly: The text asserts the *spirituality* of the divine nature. "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." The phrase, "heaven and earth," signifies the universe; and this oracle means, not only that the universe exhibits proofs of God's wisdom, power, glory, and beneficence, but that He fills it *personally*—fills it with His essence. "God is a *spirit*;" and one of the wonderful properties of God's nature is, that He can and does fill with it every portion of the illimitable universe. This, then, is the three-fold, wonderful, truth contained in the energetic words of the text. Let us now glance at a few practical inferences which naturally result from the admission of the solemn and sublime facts of this verse.

I. THE TEXT PROVES THE FOLLY AND SIN OF EVERY FORM OF IDOLATRY. When Pompey, the Roman general, had conquered Jerusalem, his curiosity prompted him to enter the temple; and finding no image there of any divinity, he

was filled with astonishment, and would fain have called the Jews Atheists. The presence of an image seemed to him an essential part, or at least an important pre-requisite, of divine worship. As Pompey thought, so all Pagans think; hence we term them *Idolaters*, (from *εἰδωλον*, an image,) because they either worship an *image* as God, or adore their divinities through the instrumentality of an image. This practice both reason and revelation condemn, as being exceedingly senseless, and exceedingly sinful. (1). Idolatry is exceedingly *senseless*. We should think that artist beside himself, who would undertake to draw a likeness of something which he had never seen, nor ever could see;—to paint a portrait of the air, the wind, the fragrance of the flower, or the human soul. We are necessarily as ignorant of the form and nature of invisible things, as the blind man was of the colour of scarlet cloth, when he said, that it resembled the sound of a “trumpet.” Then how preposterous the folly of supposing that the spiritual nature of the invisible and infinite God can be represented by “Gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.” (2). Idolatry is not only senseless, but *sinful*. How plain and how philosophical the divine precept, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,” &c. The probability is, that in the first ages of the world men made idols, not as objects of, but as stimulants to, worship; thus, thinking to be wiser than God, mankind have become “fools.” They have changed “the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” If Paul’s spirit was stirred within him when he saw the inhabitants of *one* city given to idolatry, what holy indignation should pervade our hearts, who behold the majority of the human race—six hundred millions of rational beings—degraded in intellect, polluted in heart, and miserable in life, through idol-worship; and how fervently should we pray for the time to come when the Lord “will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen!”

II. THE TRUTH OF THE TEXT SHOULD STIMULATE US TO THE CULTIVATION OF AN INCESSANTLY DEVOTIONAL SPIRIT. It has pleased God, in the kindness of His providence, to consecrate certain times and places for his especial worship. He has given us the sabbath day, during whose sacred hours we are to adore His divine perfections, to study His infallible word, and seek the blessings of the gospel of His grace. There are, also, certain *places* which are sacred to the divine worship;—the public sanctuary, the family altar, and the closet of secret meditation and prayer. But these are not the only times and places in which we are to engage in acts of worship. God is everywhere present, and therefore *everywhere* we can adore Him. The whole universe is but one vast apartment filled with the divine presence, and everywhere, therefore, we may be closeted with God. Isaac worshipped Jehovah in the fields, Jacob on the sands of the desert, Ezekiel by the river side, Nathaniel under the fig-tree, and Peter on the house-top. A good man may carry his oratory with him, wherever he goes; and thus, at all times realize the blessings of intercourse with the Infinite. “*Pray always*” is, therefore, to the devout man, no hard saying.

III. SEE IN THE TEXT A SOURCE OF SURE CONSOLATION TO THE CHRISTIAN, AMIDST THE SORROWS TO WHICH HE IS EXPOSED. “Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” And the christian forms no exception to the rule. As every sky has its dark clouds, and every sea its stormy waves, so every christian, like his master, is, more or less, “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Just as the ocean-storm tries the strength of the vessel, and the wintry wind the strength of the forest tree, so sorrow tries the strength of the christian’s confidence in his God. In times of trouble he is tempted to say, “All these things are against me.” “My way is hid from the Lord, my judgment is passed over from my God.” He *ought* to say, though “clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne.” “Can any hide himself in *secret* places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord.” God

sees his people at all times ; alike in the sunny places of their joy, and in the *secret*, dark places of their woe. He sees their every tear, He hears their every groan. His seeing is blended with *sympathy*. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." With the exercise of sympathy is connected the putting forth of divine *power*. He will either deliver us from our sorrow, or give us strength bravely to bear it. Let each christian strive to realize the incessant presence, the boundless power, the unfailing wisdom, the tender sympathy of his infinite Father ; —then, without boasting, he will be able to exclaim, as Job could sublimely say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

IV. WHAT A SAFEGUARD AGAINST THE SEDUCTIONS OF SIN MAY THOSE NOBLE WORDS PROVE. So long as we live in an imperfect world, we must expect to be exposed to temptation. (1). We are *self-tempted*. Our bodies tempt our minds, and our minds tempt our bodies. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." (2). We are *socially* tempted. Every bad man is a seducer of his fellow men. (3). We are *satanically* tempted. The devil "goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." One of the strongest safeguards against temptation is the realization of the fact mentioned in the text. Shall we yield to temptation beneath the gaze of the infinitely holy One ? Shall we dare to oppose the righteous will of Him, "in whom we live and have our being ?" Shall we dare to break the holy commands of the divine law-giver, in whose presence we are at all times placed ? When tempted to evil, let us aim to feel as he felt, who exclaimed, "How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against *God* ?" Let us fairly believe what Hagar did when she said, "Thou God seest me," and we shall be able to tramp each rising temptation beneath our feet.

J. H.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

No VI.—THE REV. DANIEL GUNN.

It is somewhat surprising, that there has not been published, what can be called a memoir of this remarkable man. Beyond some pamphlet or magazine-article, nothing has appeared on the subject. Such a fact is the more to be regretted, that whilst, on the one hand, the distinction, if it be one, has been accorded to far smaller men, there is attached, on the other, to a name deservedly reckoned by those who knew it well among the greatly honourable and useful, and which would, if familiar, be found pregnant with benefit, a certain degree of vagueness and obscurity, arising from the very peculiarities of his character and history. Few, probably, of our readers have heard the name, but still fewer are acquainted with what endeared it to thousands, and rendered it worthy of public record and remembrance.

The Rev. Daniel Gunn was born about the year 1773, at a village near Wick, Caithness. Some obscurity rests on the early years, but it is believed, that through the wise generosity of an aunt, he was placed for a time at the High School, in Edinburgh. In the critical period of unfolding and ripening faculties, when the character is usually imprest for life, intellect and heart felt the power, and bowed before the majesty of the gospel. Nature had given him rare qualifications to teach, and now that grace furnished the impulse, the work of the ministry became his choice, and the object to which unusual energies were henceforth to be consecrated.

After a short theological course under the Rev. Greville Ewing, of Glasgow, of whose character and instruction he ever spoke with deep gratitude and respect, he was for about six years an "Evangelist" in Ireland. He then determined

on crossing the channel for England, not with the view of permanent settlement, as the minister of a congregation, but of preserving somewhat of the old habits of an itinerant, by visiting several congregations in succession, and spending a few years with each.

The first experiment on English ground was made at Ilfracombe. It was not an age of watering-places, and the unsurpassed majesty of nature in that western region had not as yet been discovered by cockneys. It was not scenery that attracted the teacher, but an old presbyterian meeting-house, dating its origin far back in the past of nonconformity. Something very like Arianism, if not quite the thing itself, had been dealt out weekly to those on the one hand whose hereditary dissent, and to those on the other whose convictions were brave to bear, in the one case, the odium of earnest religion from the worldly, and in both cases of a sect, from those who imagined that loyalty was consistent only with a certain ecclesiastical constitution. Mr. Gunn was now in the maturity of his manhood, and, things in this state, skill perfected by experience is brought to bear. New vigour is imparted to that which was "ready to vanish away," and an impulse given which will take years in dying. Several of the older members of the church still speak with mingled love and awe of him whose presence quickened their youth, and the name used to be repeated to children born after his departure as one of mystery. To them he was rather a myth than a man, and the history of his visit to the place of their nativity, ranked in the imagination of childhood with the shadowy labours and benefactions of the heroes of the remote past. Before Mr. Gunn said farewell to this place, he saw another evangelical minister safe in the pulpit, while the idea of a new chapel stirred the minds of the leaders.

It may be said here, that the instruments employed with so much success, were mainly these:—first, a remarkably lively and interesting style of pulpit address, though he was not an orator in the usual sense; secondly, unwearied attention to the Sunday School, which was his hobby; and

thirdly, incessant visitation, by which the influence of his presence, always powerful, was brought beneficially to bear on all, according to their need. In these interviews he could fascinate by geniality, or overawe by sternness, as he thought the case required.

The next scene was Bishop's Hull, in Somersetshire; and then Chard, in the same county, where, until 1816, he followed the same methods, and with similar general results.

His grand field—and that which, partly through domestic circumstances, and partly from the attachment of a people who would not hear of his removal, proved final—was Christchurch, Hants, a small town in the centre of an agricultural district, but large enough for one whose aim was not publicity, but fruit. In a more central position he would have done as well, though possibly, in a somewhat different manner. The position did not prove so unimportant as might at first appear. What some men would have slighted, what would have rendered others hopeless, filled him with a high ambition—stimulated his energies, and became the scene of patient and powerful effort. He wanted human minds, and he found them here. He created the sphere of his own action, and afforded a sublime proof, that a strong will may not be stayed by the barriers of difficulty and disadvantage.

"The Christchurch Sunday School," has become a household word among those who have to do with the religious training of the young. The writer has enjoyed opportunities of observing Sunday Schools in London, and in various parts of the country, but has never seen one which, on the whole, could, in order and efficiency, compare with Mr. Gum's. The discipline was military; the general's eye everywhere present, and everywhere felt. Its glance was loved and feared—its rule absolute, but benignant.

But this was not all. Not content with working for his own congregation, with its Sunday School, Day School, and Infant School, he must originate others in the neighbourhood. Two self-supporting chapels, with commodious ministerial residences attached, rose within five miles of the

town, besides several smaller preaching stations and a number of schools. Did a minister, in some neighbouring town, think of erecting a new chapel, Mr. Gunn's aid was sought to induce some wealthy person to lay a broad foundation for the building fund. A very favourite assertion was, that "Giving is an important and much neglected means of grace." Nor was his influence confined to the circle of his own neighbourhood. Many a young and ardent soul, drawn by his fame, obtained here new insight and strength; was at this fire, kindled afresh, and departed to diffuse a powerful and steady light in some distant spot.

Thus, he continued working indefatigably, for thirty-two years. His death took place in June 1848, when he had attained, at least, the age of seventy-five. His removal was almost sudden, but his end was peace. He triumphed over death. Faith in the gospel sustained him when all else failed, and he left the world in calmness and hope. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing."

We need not scruple to apply to Mr. Gunn, the epithet, *great*. Genius was seen in all he said and did. His thought was piercing and comprehensive; his imagination, powerful and wealthy. No one who knew him well, could doubt that he was a man of deep and strong feeling. The love of that heart, was love indeed, towards a few select objects, on which it rested with almost unmingled complacency, and towards humanity in general, on which it acted with pure and lasting beneficence. He was, likewise, a good hater. The sorrow of that heart, when sorrow was there—was sorrow indeed, brooding over and darkening the soul. The joy of that heart was joy indeed, often gushing forth in strong streams. He was a bright and glowing child of the sun. His mind was remarkable for health; there was nothing morbid about him. He was never "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." Robustness, vigour—such words belonged to him.

He was distinguished by great bodily and mental *activity*. He was ever putting forth his strength. He was never still.

That mind was ever thinking—that hand was ever at work. This activity was not produced or sustained by any artificial stimulant, but was entirely healthy—in harmony with nature; one with the fields, the open sunlight, and free air. Good things were ever dropping from him—a gentle movement of the breeze, or a slight soliciting shake, and down comes the mellow fruit. He was not one of those sickly souls, who undervalue the present life, and who, weary of its strife and duties, squander it away in morbid aspirations after a premature removal to a world free from labour and sorrow. He knew the value of the present, and shrank not from “the burden and heat of the day.” He was by turns the student and the man of action—ever constructing and designing, “like a wise master builder.” Many were the plans framed with wonderful skill in the secret silence of his thought, which were afterwards brought forth into successful reality, for the good of men. Lethargy, dulness, were to him words without meaning. He dreaded nothing so much for himself as vacancy; he disliked nothing more in others. He was perpetually rousing himself and his company by saying or doing. The giant was ever in motion. Now strong strokes fell in serious earnestness and quick succession, as from the hammer of the Titan; then, in milder mood, Leviathan was sporting among the waves. He was a many-sided man, not a mere minister or teacher, but something of the farmer, more of the soldier; something of the philosopher, and a great deal of the man of the world. At times, when observing these manifestations, you felt inclined to believe, that had circumstances made him a monarch of France under the old *régime*, he would quite naturally have assumed the style and pomp of Louis Quatorze; at others, you almost imagined him Bonaparte; and at others, whom but Epictetus? The multitude and variety of the objects of his mental vision were astonishing. He seemed to have something of every country, of every age, of every remarkable person, and almost of every subject of interest. There were facts, anecdotes, illustrations, apothegms, always ready. His mind was a rich picture gallery, hung with

historical and comic pieces, and portraits ; or a large kaleidoscope, ever surprising and charming with something new and beautiful. Tired of one class of subjects, he would turn instantly to another. From important questions of national welfare, or church polity, or religious doctrine, he would turn to descant on a method of agriculture, or admire the proportions of an animal. Though possessor of this extensive general information, he was not, in the usual sense, an educated man. Yet, he had a wonderful tact of concealing his deficiencies in this respect. He seemed almost destitute of poetic sympathy with nature. Anything that was alive he loved, but had little, if any, taste for scenery.

He possessed *great influence over others*. Royalty was assumed by him as a native right, not liable to discussion. You were overpowered by a kind of fascination, and for the moment, were almost obliged to think and feel—say, and do what he would have you. With an intuitive glance, he performed the spiritual diagnosis, discerned every man's intellectual and moral stature and worth, found a place for him, and assigned him his work. This sway was much aided by advantages of person. The figure was extremely dignified, and the face noble.

We need hardly say, that he possessed *very marked individuality*. This appeared in his modes of thought and speech, in his dress, his domestic habits, and his methods of work. With regard to the last, the characteristic was staying at home. Not that he was without sympathy or help for the great modern public movements of philanthropy and evangelization which are centralized in the metropolis ; but these were never allowed to divert his attention, even for a moment, from Christchurch—his proper sphere. On this, all his efforts were concentrated. His theory was, that the influence and usefulness of a minister were proportioned to the degree in which his energies were put forth at home. And certainly, the result did credit to the theory. Were this example generally followed, what a quiet but sure and mighty change for the better would soon come over the face of religion ! He hated

ostentation, and was averse even from making public the religious statistics of his neighbourhood. When at any time a violent effort of opposition was put forth by adversaries, his advice to his friends was characteristic: "Leave them alone—take no notice—work on quietly—they will soon be tired." His convictions of the general injustice and the injury to religion itself, involved in the union of Church and State, were most decided and strongly expressed; and perhaps, no man in his own neighbourhood ever did more for the cause of enlightened nonconformity. Yet, he was a strenuous advocate for an order of ministers, and would have even its ceremonial dignities preserved by the inviolable sacredness of the pulpit for the regularly trained and "ordained," by gowns, the title Reverend, &c.

Mr. Gunn's theology, when it showed, was, to speak the truth, of an old scholastic type, and that not the highest. But it seldom *did* appear. It was not, indeed, to be altogether discarded, but respected for "auld lang syne," and occasionally drawn forth to receive a formal respect. But this was, evidently, no part of his life: he was too genial, too true, and we may add, too scriptural. He was a man of faith; he believed in God; he believed in the soul of man; he believed in himself. He had a calm possession of the truth of Christ. He well understood the relation of "the things which are seen and temporal," to "the things which are unseen and eternal." His pulpit topics were not usually theological, but chiefly characterized by scripture exposition—by practical religion, and by what may be called, church-member morality. His pulpit style was remarkable for the total absence of cant, which he abhorred, and of that canting tone, by some, mis-named *unction*.

Possessed of considerable property, he never made this an end, but used it as one, and that not the chief, means to his high end. In society, Mr. Gunn was geniality itself. He was the life of every company; he was full of humour, and extremely apt at repartee.

After what is said above about Sunday Schools, it is hardly necessary to add, that Mr. Gunn possessed *great love for*

children and young people. These were the favourite, the darling, field in which his activity and his power over other minds were exercised, and the notable means by which a very large proportion of his success was achieved. He was their more than father—his influence over them was complete. What a sight, when he was with a child! He looks on it with admiration. It is to him, a being which has not yet been spoilt by worldly influences—which is yet capable of training for noble things. The old, he regards as but too confirmed and unalterable; but children are instruments, whereby he lays hold of the future, and moulds it to his purpose. And how looks the child at him? Mark the trustfulness, the love and reverence, little short of worship, shown in that face.

To conclude this imperfect sketch of an extraordinary man, whose due it is to be made better known to the churches for their benefit, we quote Dr. Bennett's expressive and appropriate words in the Funeral Sermon:—"The jewel of Christchurch is gone." He lived long and well, and his life will yet have great results. His name will not soon die. While the religious body which he adorned exists in this country—while children are taught religion in Sunday Schools—while the town, the favoured scene of his labours, remains, so long will his name be associated with it in the minds of lovers of truth, religion, and men. When much, which now fills a greater space and makes a greater worldly figure, shall have been long forgotten, we may safely prophesy of the deep reverence with which posterity will pronounce the name of Gunn. But the results of his earthly life and activity will overstep the limits of time, and be unconsumed by the burning of the world. In eternity itself, heaven will be more glorious that there was once such a man on earth, and that his life was so spent.

W. C., M.A.

TEUTONIC GLEANINGS.

"ALL operation of God is really one, and the yearly awakening of nature in the spring is quite as immediate an operation of God as the first awakening of nature on the morning of creation."—*Bretschneider*.

"Two things fill the mind with ever new and growing admiration and awe, the oftener and more continuously thought is employed therewith—the starred heaven over me and the moral law within me. Neither of these dare I seek, or merely imagine as veiled in darkness, or as in the expanse beyond my sphere of vision: I see them before me, and connect them immediately with the consciousness of my existence. The former begins with the spot which I occupy in the outer world of sense, and widens the connexion in which I stand to unappreciable extent, with worlds on worlds and systems on systems; moreover to the boundless times of their periodic movement—its beginning and duration. The second begins with my invisible self, my personality, and exhibits me in a world which has true infinity, and with which, I know myself to be in universal and necessary connexion."—*Kant*.

"Nature is an enemy to everlasting possessions. She demolishes after fixed laws, all signs of property, extirpates all tokens of formation. The earth belongs to all generations; each of them has a title to all. The earlier may not thank this chance of primogeniture for preference. The right of property goes out at determined times. Amelioration and deterioration stand under unalterable conditions. But if the body is a property, whereby I gain the rights of an active citizen of the earth, yet by the loss of this property I cannot suffer the loss of myself. I lose nothing but the place in this college of princes, and enter into a higher corporation, whither my beloved colleagues follow me."—*Novalis*.

"Truth is the law of knowledge. Knowledge is the first groundwork of the spiritual life of man. The idea of truth demands, that man gain inner clearness of thought, procure himself insight; and to this cultivation of insight and to every kind of knowledge truth imparts an immediate inner value, since therein the life of our spirit is fashioned."—*Fries*.

"I am immortal, imperishable, eternal, as soon as I form the resolution to obey the laws of eternal reason; I am not merely destined to become so. The transcendental world is no future world, it is now present; it can at no period of finite existence be more present than at another; not more after the lapse of myriads of ages than at this moment. My future sensuous existence may be liable to various modifications, but these are just as little true life, as those of the present. By that resolution of the will I lay hold on eternity, and rise high above all transitory states of existence."—*Fichte*.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[WE hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

BAUMGARTEN'S APOSTOLIC HISTORY, 3 vols. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS. By ROBERT KNIGHT, Perpetual Curate of Warton. London: Samuel Bagster and Sons.

A GUIDE TO THE APOCALYPSE: including a Refutation of all Extant Schemes of Interpretation, and a Demonstrated Outline of the True. London: James Nisbet and Co., Berners Street.

The METHOD of God's revelation to man in the scriptures, is so different to all probable *a priori* suppositions as to form the basis, not only of some of the most specious reasonings of infidelity against THE BOOK, but also the platform of much anxious questioning amongst the most learned and thinking of those who firmly hold its divinity as a fact, and develop its influence as a reformative and enobling power. Why did the Infinite reveal his thoughts, which are intended for humanity, in languages never thoroughly understood, except by a small portion of the race, and which, as common and practical organs of thought, are dying out? Why too, in these languages, through images borrowed from the habits and customs of ancient people, which are well-nigh obsolete, and with which the millions have never been acquainted? And why, moreover, through the visions and reasonings of men of such peculiar poetic and dialectic mental organizations, as to render some of their utterances unintelligible to a considerable section of our kind? It might have been otherwise. He could have written His ideas in such sentences as all could understand: yes, and as none could any more mistake than they could the clearest sentence embodying the simplest mathematical axioms. And antecedently, we say, this might have been expected. Now, it seems to us, that there are such advantages connected with the *method* adopted, as to prove that it is, notwithstanding all, the wisest and the best. Our space will only allow us to suggest, in the *briefest* way, a few of those advantages.

First: The adopted method establishes an important resemblance between nature and the Bible. Nature has doctrines which its AUTHOR

has revealed to humanity as of the vast importance to its interests. But how are they revealed? Are they palpable to every eye? Or expressed in such intelligible forms as to admit of no debate amongst its students? Let the history of all scientific research answer. Here, then, is a resemblance. But of what service, it may be asked, is a resemblance between nature and the Bible? Just this, that a man can never believe in the Bible, if it appear incongruous with nature. Nature is his normal authority for the divine.

Secondly: The adopted method supplies the most powerful stimulus to intellectual action. Without mental activity, man cannot progress in knowledge, virtue, or greatness. His well-being depends on thinking. Whatever, therefore, most impels him to this, is his greatest good. There is no power on earth equal to the Bible for this; and that because of its method. Men feel that the knowledge of the **CHIEF GOOD** is to be obtained only in the Bible; but such is the mode of its revelation, that it can only be got by an enquiry into the structure of ancient languages, the usages of ancient times, the laws of thought, and the philosophy of moral obligation. Hence it is, that the Bible, as a historical fact, is the greatest thought-creating power in the world. Had everything in the Bible been obvious, there would have been no demand on thought; and without thought, this necessary condition of advancement would have been wanting.

Thirdly: The adopted method furnishes a sphere for the highest ministry of man to his fellows. Social unity and concord are amongst the greatest blessings of man as a social being. But these can only be obtained by reciprocal offices of love. By giving one man what another has not, God has given to each a power of strengthening the social bond. Now, the highest ministry is that of divine truth. But if this truth was revealed in a method which made it equally intelligible to all, it is manifest that men would be denied the privilege of being able to discharge the highest service for his fellow.

Fourthly: The adopted method tends to make every Biblical student feel his dependence upon the special aid of its author. To feel this, is of vital importance; there is no religion without it; but if all the truths contained in the Bible were revealed so plainly as to require no study, and to admit of no mistake, then, Where would be the necessity of the extraneous help of its author?

These remarks, which have been suggested by the volumes above, account for, and justify, the constant flow from age to age of fresh exegetical works on the same portions of divine truth. Each new Exegete professes to remove some difficulty which overtasked his predecessor, or to have discovered some truth which had been hid from all foregoing explorers.

BAUMGARTEN'S work, consisting of three volumes, on the Acts of

the Apostles, is remarkable on many accounts. He regards the Acts of the Apostles as Luke's continuation of Christ's history. As designed, not so much to record the acts of the Apostles, as the ACTS OF CHRIST through the apostles. His position is, that "the ascended Jesus is properly the active subject" of the book. This view he sustains by various weighty, and to us, very satisfactory considerations; and it is certainly a view which clothes this interesting portion of scripture with new attractions; it binds all the various incidents into an organic whole, and gives a warmer glow and a lovelier blush of divine life to every part than we had ever discovered before. The learned author does not follow most of his predecessors in criticising every verse *seriatim*, but he takes up whole narratives and paragraphs, and exhibits them in the broad light of his new idea; and Jesus is seen in all; and all seem to have some new phase and power. We heartily commend the work. No brother should preach on the Acts of the Apostles before he consults it. Of all the excellent works that the enterprising publisher has issued from his foreign "Theological Library," there are few, if any, that have claims to the special attention of the student equal to this.

Mr. KNIGHT's Commentary on the Romans is also a work of unusual critical merit. Because it does some things in connexion with this important portion of Holy Writ, which its predecessors have omitted, and does them well, it is not a superfluity, but a necessity; it fills an unoccupied sphere, and we hail it. It seems to us to have two distinguishing excellences:—first, the extensive use it makes of the most illustrious of both ancient and modern annotators. Most of the opinions quoted are quickening rays of sanctified learning and genius, and are valuable on that account alone; but they are increasingly valuable as you see them break certain clouds that had hung over and obscured many expressions of the great apostle. The other distinguishing excellence is its full and clear paraphrase of the whole epistle, embodying the author's interpretation. Although we do not agree with all the renderings and views which it contains, we heartily appreciate Mr. Knight's labours. He has evidently brought to his work the true spirit of an expounder—and unusual qualifications—remarkable insight into Paul's mental peculiarities, a thorough acquaintance with the circumstances under which he lived, the language in which he wrote, and the master idea in his mind, at the time he plied his pen; also, a comprehensive and appreciative knowledge of the labours of his predecessors in the field.

As to the other work at the head of this paper, "A GUIDE TO THE APOCALYPSE," we confess our inability to pronounce a judgment. We cannot say that it is "a refutation of all extant schemes of interpretation," for we have not fully examined all extant schemes of

interpretation, and, perhaps, never shall. Albeit, our impression of the work before us is, that it has strong claims to devout study. The author has a new and commanding idea of the compass, scope, and chief epochs, of the apocalypse, and sustains that idea with the earnestness of one who really believes in it, and with the force of one who has great native ability, and considerable hermeneutical and theological attainments. We hope to go through it more carefully than we have done, that we may express a more definite judgment upon his theory.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM SHENSTONE, one volume. Also, the POETICAL WORKS OF SAMUEL BUTLER, two volumes; with Life, Critical Dissertation and Explanatory Notes. By the Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

These works make eleven handsome volumes of Mr. Nichol's Library Edition of the Poets. We cannot say that either the character or poetry of either Butler or Shenstone excites much of our admiration; but such is the place they have gained in our literature that no poetic library would be regarded as complete without them. The editor, in his masterly dissertation has, with a very delicate discrimination, pointed out the defects as well as exhibited the excellences, of both. He is an anatomist of man as well as poets, he can discover the principles lying at the foundation of moral character, as well as the elements which go to make up a true bard. We have been somewhat amused at recent attempts to depreciate the literary merits of our editor, by writers, whose compositions, as compared with his, are as winter's moonlight to the life-giving sunbeams of May. Envy, the coal which "comes hissing hot from hell," has ever inspired the detraction of *felt* superiority. If any of our readers have not as yet become subscribers to this splendid edition of our poets, we urge them at once to become so.

THE NECESSARY EXISTENCE OF GOD. By WILLIAM GILLESPIE. New edition. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black.

This work consists of an enquiry into the defects of a mere *a posteriori* argument for a God, reviews of the demonstrations by Mr. Locke, Dr. Samuel Clarke, the Rev. Moses Lowman, and Bishop Hamilton, of the existence and attributes of a Deity, proofs that necessary existence implies infinite existence, a full and convincing statement of the *a priori* argument for the existence and attributes of a GREAT FIRST CAUSE, and a refutation of certain objections which one *Antitheos* urged against the *a priori* argument. This is one of those

books whose thoughts are so profound, whose every sentence is so bound together by the indissoluble laws of logic, and whose style is so unusually condensed, that it must be read through to be appreciated—it cannot be represented. It has no equal in the high realm of thought to which it belongs; it is *the* book on the subject. The weaving of such a web of abstract thought is a marvellous feat of intellect. We are convinced that he who treads this *a priori* road will find that club of Hercules by which, logically, all the hydra-heads of theoretic Atheism can be crushed.

EDWARD IRVING ; an Ecclesiastical and a Literary Biography. By WASHINGTON WILKS, Author of a History of the Half-Century, &c. London: William Freeman.

SIX LECTURES ON SECULARISM. By the REV. JOSEPH PARKER, Author of a Soldier's Retrospect. London: William Freeman.

Mr. Wilks' Volume we have read with intense interest. His subject is a great one. A MAN, the like of whom only one appears now and then in a whole generation, moving intellectually and spiritually head and shoulders above his contemporaries, with a great ingenuous soul, producing thoughts which would even startle himself, and with eyes looking ever wistfully and intently into the invisible heart of things; a MAN, whose idiosyncrasies were too mighty to be merged in the mould of ordinary life, whose proportions were too gigantic to float on the stream of popular sentiment, but, *standing*, lifted his stalwart head above the highest wave, and thundered in the name of God, not only to the millions, but to the dignities of church and state, as they drifted by; a MAN, whose age understood him not; whose intellect broke technical creeds, as Sampson broke the withs, and whose sympathies bore him over the boundary walls of his mother church; such is the MAN whose life and writings Mr. Wilks records in this volume. He does his work with the tenderness of a friend, the discrimination of a sage, the skill of an artist, and the fidelity of a saint.

Mr. Parker's little book deserves, and we trust will secure, a very wide circulation. The author thoroughly understands his subject. He has faced the Apostle of Secularism, and several evenings publicly discussed with him the whole question. It is no common production; there is no logical quibbling here, no fighting for orthodox technicalities; there is not a breath of the *odium theologicum* in any sentence; but the spirit of intelligent reverence for vital truths, of fair play, and generous feeling for a logical antagonist, circulates through every page. The arguments, for the most part, are built of new materials, united by the cement of logical laws, and arranged by an architect, who not only

understands the scientific principles, but feels the divine poetry, of his work. Let churches purchase this pamphlet, and distribute it amongst thinking operatives. We know of nothing better for the sceptical portions of such.

LADIES OF THE REFORMATION: Memoirs of Distinguished Female Characters Belonging to the Period of the Reformation, in the Sixteenth Century. By the Rev. JAMES ANDERSON. Illustrated by J. GODWIN, J. W. ARCHER, &c. London: Blackie and Son.

The title is a tolerably full description of this magnificent volume. All its component parts—paper and print, illustrations, authorship, and binding, are of the first quality. Mr. Anderson introduces some of the most attractive events and characters in English history, in a way to interest and instruct at the same time. We have seen no book of the season so suitable for gentlemen to present as a “Christmas Gift” to the fair objects of their affection and choice.

THE PRESENT WORLD-CRISIS: a Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, at Glasgow. By JAMES GOOLD, Newton Stewart. Paisley: Alex. Gardner.

A REVIEW OF SEVEN YEARS PASTORATE: A Sermon By W. LEASK. London: William Freeman, 69, Fleet Street.

The first of the above discourses, as its title imports, is one for the times, and a very good one it is. It sketches some of the crises through which the world has passed, and the terrible one through which it is struggling now; what it *ought* to be, and what, under the influence of christianity, it is destined to become. It displays fine attributes of thought, feeling, and expression; it has not a dull sentence; it is full of life, impulsive, and healthy; promising even greater things in the future. We shall be glad to meet the author soon again.

Mr. Leask, our esteemed neighbour, is too well known and appreciated as a writer, to require a word of introduction from us. His discourse we have read with much pleasure, and we heartily congratulate him on the success which has attended his pastoral and pulpit labours during the last seven years. We trust that the “Christian Weekly News,” in his hand, will obtain that public favor which it justly deserves,—as a paper which gives a faithful digest of the events of the week, examines all topics in the broad light of the Bible, and whose leaders are nerved with logic, inspired with religion, and beautified with poetry.

A HOMILY

ON

The Spiritual Universe.

"For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."—Luke xxiv. 39.

"There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the almighty giveth them understanding."—Job xxxii. 8.

"Now the Egyptians are men and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit."—Isaiah xxxi. 3.

BOTH the Hebrew word *ruach*, and the Greek *pneuma*, translated in the above passages "spirit," have no less than four different significations in the Bible; their meaning, therefore, in any given place, is to be determined by the connexion in which they stand. Sometimes the word in each language stands for *wind*: thus in Amos, "He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind"; so in Isaiah, "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind;" and thus in John, "The wind bloweth where it listeth." Sometimes the word in each language stands for *the vital principle*. Thus in the Psalms, "His breath goeth forth;" thus in Ecclesiastes, "Yea they have all one breath"; and thus in Luke, "Her spirit (life) came again, and she arose straightway." Sometimes the word stands for the *mental disposition*: thus in Numbers, "And the spirit of jealousy came upon him"; thus in Deuteronomy, "Full of the spirit of wisdom"; and thus in Romans, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption." Hence the meaning of the expressions "spiritual man," and "spiritually minded." And sometimes the word in each language stands for the

rational nature: this is evidently its import in the passages before us; and in this sense it is applied to men, angels, and God.*

Before turning our attention to the main subject we have in view, it seems desirable that we should say a word on the circumstances and primitive application of each scripture at the head of this homily. The circumstances which gave rise to the first passage, which is the utterance of Christ, are so well known as scarcely to require an explanatory remark. On the third day after the interment of Christ, he appears to his disciples who were assembled for sacred converse in Jerusalem. He stands in their midst, and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." But they were terrified and affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." The second passage in our text requires no remark. And the passage from Isaiah seems evidently to have been uttered in that juncture in the history of the Jews, when their national dangers, from the contemplated invasion of Sennacherib, were so imminent as to urge them to seek the alliance of Egypt. This alliance the prophet denounces. It implied the want of confidence in their God, it was dishonourable to Him, it was opposed to His will. And in this verse, such an alliance is proclaimed as utterly futile and vain. "Now the Egyptians are men and not God; and their horses flesh and not spirit." The argument being:—So tremendous is your danger from this ruthless invader, that no power, short of the power of God, can deliver you; but the Egyptians have not this power,—God is not with them; and, therefore, your alliance is utterly unavailing.

* If the reader will consult his Hebrew and Greek Concordances, he will find that we have given only a very few instances out of a large number, where in each case the word both in the Hebrew and Greek, is used in these different senses.

Now, it is not our intention to notice the many interesting and profitable truths which may be fairly drawn from each portion of our text, considered in its connexion, but to state and illustrate three facts which all agree in teaching ; namely :—

I. THAT THERE IS IN THE UNIVERSE A SPECIES OF EXISTENCE SEPARABLE FROM ALL MATERIAL ORGANIZATIONS, HERE CALLED SPIRIT. Christ distinctly states that “a spirit *hath not* flesh and blood.” Before we enter on the proof of this proposition, we feel it expedient to deal for a moment with a question which meets us at the threshold of our subject ; namely, *what* is spirit ? We confess our utter inability to solve a problem on which the greatest sages of all times have pleaded ignorance. To say that it is a something that is *immaterial*, instead of answering the question, only starts it in another form. What is the immaterial something—what is immateriality ? Or to say that it is a thinking and reasoning principle, is as far from a solution : the question comes up again, What is that principle ? Yet, though spirit thus transcends all our definitions, there are certain ideas we attach to it, which mark it off in broad and clear outline from all material existence—at least, from all the material existences of which we have any knowledge. What are those ideas ?

First : *We attach the idea of elementalness to spirit.* By this we mean that its existence is not made up of parts, but that it is an uncompounded and unmixed entity. All material existences are combinations. All vegetables and animals are compounds of various elements ; abstract one of their constituent principles, and they cease to be. Indeed, it is probable, there is nothing that we know of, even in the inorganic world of matter that is a simple substance. Probably, the next race of chemical analysts will find that oxygen, nitrogen, and such substances, which are now considered elemental, are but compositions. But we think of spirit as an uncompounded principle—as something that is

not made up of parts—something that you cannot divide—that you can take nothing from, and put nothing to.

Secondly : *We attach the idea of moral activity to spirit.* Inertness is a quality of matter ; neither dust nor globe would ever move, were it not set in motion by a foreign force. And whilst life in trees and flesh moves, it ever moves by impulses, over which it has no controul ;—hence in these forms it moves in the beaten track of ages. Each plant acts under the same circumstances in the same way—rejects and appropriates, as did the first parent of its kind which grew in the garden of Eden. Each individual of the various tribes of earth, and air, and sea, does the same thing, in the same manner, as did its primal sire. But spirit we consider self-moving and self-controuling. Each chooses its own line of action and determines its own pace. Each is a distinct fountain of influences, outpouring streams that never flowed before ; a self-acting machine, performing evolutions and producing results, the like of which has never been before and never will be again. No two spirits have the same history. Each has chapters of thought, feeling, and deed, which find no record in the other. To spirit, therefore, we attach the idea of an existent which *acts*, but which acts not *necessarily* ; neither from an inward impulse nor an outward force, but from *itself*.

Thirdly : *We attach the idea of reflection to spirit.* By this we mean, the power to turn back upon itself, study its own nature, translate its own sensations into ideas, and create a world of thought of its own—a power to rise from the particular to the universal—the discordant to the harmonious—the creature to the Creator—a power to link the most solitary fact in fellowship with an eternal principle, and bring the wildest and harshest sounds into the scale of intellectual music—a power which, from the facts of its own consciousness, builds up a superstructure for itself in which it can live as an independent monarch, secure from all foreign invaders and independent of all help ; where it can

worship as a scraph under the ever-brightening rays of God—a power by which the mind reads the philosophy, feels the poetry, and chants the anthems, writ on creation's hieroglyphic page. Brutes have no such power as this; the universe is nothing but sensation to them; it gives them no idea; they cannot spell a word of meaning from any part of its various and vast revelations.

Fourthly: *We attach the idea of religiousness to spirit.* By this we mean a tendency to, and capacity for, worship. In the tribes of irrational existences around us we discover no such principle as this. None displays any knowledge of a great first cause, nor, therefore, any desire to worship Him. The sunlight of ten thousand days gives to them no idea of their Creator, nor do the blessings which they receive through a long life, filling up every sense with pleasure, and satisfying every appetite and want, awaken in them one sentiment of gratitude toward Him. The mind of the most sagacious of their class is a blank in relation to God; it has neither the eye to see Him, nor the sensibility to feel His spiritual touch. But *spirit* we regard as the offspring of "the Father of spirits," partaking of His essence, possessing the filial element as its primary impulse; and having, therefore, both a native tendency and a moral obligation to reverence, praise and serve Him. Spirit feels itself morally related to Him, has its eye wistfully fixed upon Him; and its heart "cries out for the living God." The language of David expresses the experience and attitude of all spirits in their normal state.

"Unto thee I lift mine eyes,
O thou, that dwellest in the heavens.
Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters,
And as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress,
So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God."

Fifthly: *We attach the idea of self-modification to spirit.* There is nothing in nature which seems to us to possess the self-modifying attribute but spirit. The mountains cannot make themselves higher, nor the stars make themselves

brighter ; the ocean can make itself neither broader nor deeper, nor the earth increase its verdure or fecundity by its own act. Irrational life, also, seems destitute of this self-modifying power. Brutes change not their condition ; their habits are fixed ; they seem as incapable of deviating from the laws of instinct, as stars of swerving from their pathway. The birds that warble in our groves are neither wiser nor better than their first parents that poured their music into the ear of Adam. But spirit has a self-forming and a self-altering power. No one spirit is compelled to act like another, nor even to act as it has itself acted heretofore. It has a power to map out new pathways for itself, to widen its own domain, to increase its own energy, and augment its own wealth ; to rise through all the stages of glory, or sink through all the degrees of degradation.

Sixthly : *We attach the idea of absolute personal identity to spirit.* There is no permanent identity in any corporeal organization : such organization is composed of particles, all of which are in a state of constant flux. Corporeally the man cannot say that he is the same as he was when a youth ;—every particle of his frame has changed since then. Since then, perhaps, many of the particles which once belonged to other men, have helped to build his frame, and in their turn gone off to form parts of other frames. The body is like a river, every particle is in rapid flow—in constant circulation, and is the same only in form and function : never a moment the same in all its materials. But we think of spirit as being ever the same in essence ; a simple indivisible substance, that can never lose a particle of itself, and that can never have any new element wrought into its being. It may change its conditions, it may vary its moods, it may alter its realms of action, and new thoughts and feelings may stream through it in endless succession ; but in essence it is evermore the same ; the everlastingly identical *ego*, or *self* of being. Truly does Dr. Reid remark, “that all mankind place their personality in something that cannot be divided, or consist of parts.”

We turn now to the question of evidence. What proof is there, it may be asked, that there are such beings as spirits?

(1.) *The structure of the visible universe indicates the existence of spirit.* The universe seems to be *produced by, and designed for, spirit.* Matter is essentially inert;—but every part of nature is in motion; matter is blind;—but every part of nature indicates the most consummate contrivance; matter is heartless;—but every part of nature is warm and instinct with goodness. The whole system of creation, so far as it comes within my narrow vision, is a reflection of the ideas I attach to spirit. In every part of its wondrous structure the “invisible things,” as from a burnished mirror, are “clearly seen.” And then too, it seems designed *for spirit.* Does not its exquisite contrivance appeal to thought, its warm and ever gushing streams of goodness to gratitude, its enchanting realms of beauty to admiration, its infinite grandeur and sublimity to reverence and awe? Indeed the whole system of visible nature seems to me to *imply spirit*, and to be incomplete without it. Let landscapes unfold their beauty, and oceans roll in grandeur; let the immeasurable dome above display its radiant worlds by night, and its glorious sun by day;—all is lifeless without spirit. Without spirit there is no eye for beauty, no heart for goodness, no soul for sublimity and grandeur. What is this fair universe without spirit, but a magnificent mansion without a tenant; a theatre disclosing the most enchanting scenes and inspiring plots without a spectator; a temple filled with the glories of the shekinah, but containing no worshipper? I infer, therefore, that wherever there is a streak of beauty, a ray of glory, or a note of music, in whatever orb, however far away, *there are spirits to study, adore, and love.*

(2.) *The concurrent impressions of mankind sustain the belief.* Men, from remotest times, in all places, and in every stage of culture, from the lowest point to the highest, have believed in a spiritual world. The philosophy of the sage, as well as the superstition of the savage, and the fancy

of the poet, has peopled the atmosphere with ghosts. The Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Jews, as well as the polytheistic world in all times, regarded every section of nature as filled with spirits (demons). The gods of the heathen were but the forms which man devised to represent his ideas of mysterious spirits, that tenanted the earth, ruled the elements, and presided over the destinies of our race.* Man cannot shake off faith in spiritual existence : the child believes in it without evidence ; and the old man who has passed through a life of scepticism, as in the case of Robert Owen, becomes a firm believer in tales of ghostly exploits. Men see spirits, not only in dim twilight, but in the high noon of civilization. A belief, so universal, must be intuitive ; and an intuitive belief must be true, otherwise there is no truth for man.

(3.) *The Bible most unequivocally declares the fact.* It tells us of spirits that are ascending and descending between heaven and earth—that are ever moving the vast and complicated wheels of providence, and that are ever on the wing to execute the behests of their sovereign. It tells us that there are “legions” of such existences ; that they exist in various orders and states ; and that there is One Infinite Spirit—the parent sustainer and judge of all ; who is above all, and in all, and through all, God blessed for ever.

I am bound to believe, then, that the universe is something more than I can see—something more than *can* be brought within the cognizance of my five senses—something distinct from the terraqueous globe on which I live, and the huge worlds of flame that roll above me and shed their brightness on my path—something behind all, or rather *in* all, and *above* all. Aye, the angels, demons, genii, sylphs, and ghosts, of which all nations have thought and spoken, are something more than the airy offspring of a superstitious imagination ; there are existences answering, in some degree at least, to the notions which humanity has ever attached to such mystic terms. I am not disposed—to use language which I have

* See Enfield's History of Philosophy ; also, Cudworth's Intellectual System.

elsewhere employed,—to pronounce all who have stated that they have seen spirits, either fanatics or impostors. The *a priori* wonder is, not that they should be seen, but that they are not more generally perceived. We are related to the material world, and we have senses to discern material existences. We are, confessedly, more intimately and solemnly related to the spiritual; and is it not natural to expect that we should have a sense to see spiritual beings? Were such a sense to be opened within us, as the eye of Elijah's servant was opened of old, what visions would burst upon us! The microscope gives us a new world of wonders; but were God to open the spiritual eye, what a universe of spirits would be revealed!

II. THAT OF THIS SPECIES OF SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE MAN IS A MEMBER, EVEN IN HIS CORPOREAL AND EARTHLY STATE. We say *member*, for in a subsequent discourse we shall find that his race, however numerous, is but a very inconsiderable section of the great spiritual universe. Still, he is a part. "There is a spirit in man," saith the text. Man has spirit in him, or more properly, perhaps, he *is* spirit. Man has a something in him to which we attach all the ideas we associate with spirit in general; a something in which he places his identity; a something which originates moral activity, and which turns back upon itself and reflects upon its own states; a something which points him to God and fills him oft times with solemn sentiment; a something by which he is constantly modifying his condition; a something which, whether it be *immaterial* in its essence or not—for over the essence of all things there is a veil through which the keenest eye of science has never pierced—is *universally felt* to be different to all material organization, and which we denominate mind, or spirit; a something in which our *personality* inheres, and which we regard as *self*. Let men call it what they please, all have the principle, answering in every point to the aforementioned ideas which we attach to *spirit*.

If different phenomena indicate different substances,* then spirit is essentially different from matter; and if spirit be essentially different from matter, then we have stronger philosophical evidence for its existence than we have for the existence of matter. Three facts duly pondered and estimated will indicate our authority for these remarks.

First: *All the evidence, either for the existence of matter or spirit, is derived exclusively from phenomena.* We have nothing but the operations and appearances of either;—the essence of both is alike hidden. It is under the impenetrable shadows of the ever unknown. Secondly: *That the essence whose phenomena appeals most directly to consciousness, is the most conclusively proved.* Consciousness is evermore our ultimate standard—our infallible judge. The senses deceive and so does the understanding,—but consciousness never. Thirdly: *That the phenomena of mind alone appeal directly to consciousness.* We are not conscious of the phenomena of matter, we are only conscious of certain impressions made upon our senses. But the phenomena of mind,—thought, emotion, volition, hope, and fear, are immediate subjects of consciousness.

But the men who theoretically deny to man a spirit are few indeed, compared with the vast multitudes who hold it in their creed and deny it in their practice; who live as if they had no soul, and as if the body was the all-in-all of man. I would impress upon such, had I the power, three considerations:—

(1.) *That they are now in the spiritual world.* There is a popular idea that man enters the spiritual world at death, and that he is separated from it now. Let this idea be banished. We are as truly in the spiritual world now as we shall ever be. Where is the sphere of spirit? Where is it *not*? Spirits fill the universe. The body does not separate me

* We are aware that pantheistic philosophy denies this; it teaches that there is but one SUBSTANCE, the *absolute* and *eternal*, in the universe, and that all phenomena, even the most apparently diverse—such as *thought* and *extension* inhere in it.

from spirit ;—it is the residence of spirit and its medium of communication. There is naught that separates me from the spiritual world but my unbelief,—and that is my sin. Death, perhaps, will not take me farther into it; but it will open my faithless eyes and make me see it. Jesus walked the earth as the scene of spirits, and the apostles wrought their mission under the impression that a “cloud of witnesses” were looking on from the spiritual world. Add to my body another sense and you will give me a new material world; and give my spirit an earnest evangelical faith, and I shall look at “things unseen” through the medium of all the palpable and material around me.

(2.) *They are now amenable to all the laws of the spiritual world.* One law governs the material; and one law governs the spiritual—and that is love. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.” This law is binding upon man now, as it will ever be ;—as binding upon him here in his degradation and weakness, as it is upon a seraph in the zenith of his dignity and strength. This is the “royal law” of the spiritual world.

(3.) *They are now forming a character which will determine their lasting condition in the spiritual world.* What will decide my abiding position and circumstances in the great universe of disembodied spirit? “THINGS DONE IN THE BODY.” Not things *of* the body. Material wealth and splendour, however great, will go for nothing there. Earth’s mightiest patricians are there on a level with her poorest plebeians. The hand of death strips princes of all their earthly garniture, and leaves their spirits bare to the common eye of souls, and to the searching eye of God. Nor, merely “things done” *by* “the body.” It is but a small portion of our life-deeds that we perform *by* the body—that we allow to take a *palpable* form. Our works are *really* done, before a hand is lifted, or a muscle moves. Heart and brain are our workers; limbs are but our instruments, which we may use or not. Things done *by* the body are but

contingent and occasional exhibitions, or specimens, of the innumerable and complicated things that are done *in* it. *Volitions*, with all their trains of thought, and feeling, and impulse, are the deeds done *in* the body. The theatre of moral action is not the spot of ground on which the actor stands, but the state of heart he is in :—it is never space but always soul. Hence robberies are effected where no mite has been taken from another ; slanders and falsehoods uttered where the tongue has spoken naught but truth ; and horrid murders perpetrated where a blow has never been inflicted upon another. It is the unseen things, then, my brother, done *in* the body, that will determine thy everlasting condition *out* of it.

III. THAT THESE SPIRITUAL EXISTENCES ARE THE CHIEF FORCES OF THE WORLD. “Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit.” It is here evidently implied that a spirit is mightier than a horse. A horse is one of the most powerful of animals. The ancients attached the idea of immense force to a well-trained war horse.

“Hast thou given the horse strength ?
 Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder ?
 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper ?
 The glory of his nostrils is terrible.
 He paweth in the Valley, and rejoiceth in his strength :
 He goeth on to meet the armed men.
 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted ;
 Neither turneth he back from the sword.
 The quiver rattleth against him,
 The glittering spear and the shield.
 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage ;
 Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.
 He saith among the trumpets, Ha ! ha !
 And he smelleth the battle afar off.
 The thunder of the captains and the shouting.” *

* See Pictorial Bible in loco.

First: *Spirit is the original power.* We see power everywhere around us. We see it in the inanimate world, as the effect which one element produces upon another, and in the motion which one body, in a certain relation, produces upon another. We see it, also, in the world of life: in the plant that turns to its use, and transmutes into its own essence, the elements that play about it; in the beast that drags along the farmer's harvest-wain, and in the bird that rises on the wing, and chaunts its victories over that force that binds the earth and links it to the sun. All these powers are manifestly effects, not ultimate causes—are derived, not primal. All true science suggests this, and the Bible declares it. Spirit is the fontal force. It was spirit that gave to the elements the proclivity to act and re-act on each other; and that so poised the masses of the universe that one should gently press its fellow into lines and ratios of motion, and thus conduce to the harmony and well-being of all. And the forces of life too, whether in the fibres of plants or the muscles of flesh, are but the breathings of that spirit which "reneweth the face of the earth." "*He stretcheth out the north over the empty place and hangeth the earth upon nothing.*" "*By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.*"

Secondly: *Spirit is the subordinating power.* The horses of the Egyptians, we are told, were "flesh and not spirit." Implying, probably, the fact, that the Egyptian cavalry lacked that intelligence and skill necessary to render the noble animal of service in the field of battle. The value of the steed in the strife is ever in proportion to the skill of the rider. "*Wisdom is better than weapons of war.*" Reason is mightier than brute force. Probably, all animal and material forces are under the direction of spiritual agents, and are used by them to their own ends. Pythagoras, and many of the Grecian philosophers, promulgated this opinion; and the Bible evidently bears testimony to its truth. In Ezekiel's vision, spirits are represented as moving the various wheels in the great machinery of the universe;

and in John's Apocalypse, they are spoken of as standing on the "four corners of the earth, that the winds should not blow upon the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." Anyhow, what force is there on earth that man cannot subordinate to his will? Man can press every element into his service as well as every living creature. He has done so. He has cut a pathway through the ocean, ridden upon the billows, and made the winds help him on his way; he has linked his chariot to the fire, and travelled as on the wings of the wind; he turns aside the rushing thunder-bolt, and makes electricity the messenger of his thoughts. Nor has he been less successful in subordinating animal forces to his ends. He has tamed the most wild and ferocious, and made the mightiest do his pleasure. "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea," are, by his intelligence, made ministers to his desires and to his weal.

Let us, brother, rise to a sense of the greatness of that nature with which the great God has endowed us. We are SPIRIT; emanations of the Infinite MIND, and members of that spiritual system, for which matter, in all its functions and forms, was made. Let us assert our supremacy over the material—"use the world as not abusing it." In one sense, we can never think too highly of ourselves. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The Pulpit in the Family.

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON THE GRADUAL, BUT EFFECTUAL, OPERATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH IN THE WORLD.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”—Matt. xiii. 33.

THE gradual advancement of God’s truth, or religion, in the earth, from an origin, humble and unpromising, to a position of absolute and universal dominion—is, we conceive, the lesson of the text. In its development, let us notice the three most prominent points of analogy which obtain between the influence of “leaven” and the operation of religious truth, as being:—

First: Latent or hidden. The woman “took and hid the leaven.” Secondly: Assimilative; for the leaven gradually communicated its own properties to the substance with which it was brought into contact. And, Thirdly: Effectual; for, in due time, the whole mass became “leavened.”

These points we may consider as practically illustrated by the christian life. (1.) In the individual man, and (2.) In society at large.

I. LATENT, OR HIDDEN. The woman “took and hid the leaven.”

First: *That change which the gospel is designed and fitted to work in man collectively, it seeks to effect through man individually.* Not by one irresistible and universal fiat did Jehovah choose to call back the human species from that dead apostacy into which they were plunged by our federal head. Not by changing the moral relationships of the creature to the Creator, not by the putting forth of a

resistless, wide-sweeping, renovating, energy, did He stoop to lift man, sinful, to the high eminence of man in his pristine purity. By none of these means did God choose to counteract evil, and expel it from the world. But by putting forth a scheme of moral and spiritual truth, embodying such elements as that it should slowly, yet effectually, recommend itself to individual spirits, subdue their darkness and enmity, assail and destroy sin; and thus go on to the conquest of the whole human family, when the sublime spectacle of a rebel world, redeemed, saved, sanctified, should attest, to an observant universe, the wisdom, power, and benevolence of the triune God-head.

Secondly : *Thus to treat with man, even though in sin, was only to conform to the fixed principles of his nature.* If a depraved moral being can be renewed, it must be by a moral power and instrumentality,—and such is the power of the gospel. It is to our moral nature the divine message addresses itself. Its doctrines, precepts, duties—its appeals, its arguments, its threatenings, and promises, are all adapted to influence our moral nature—the motive power of humanity. And in this fact, we must look for the first point of analogy—the *latency* or *hiddenness* of spiritual influence, when first it begins the great work of moral transmutation in the soul. We are aware that inward principles usually develope themselves in outward action; but it is in the very *formation* of such principles the latent struggle ensues, and in their attaining the requisite dominance within, to be develope in a godly deportment without. When we begin to read an internal renovation in the outer life, usually an immense work has been done, of which we have been utterly incapable of taking any note. It is impossible for us to say at what point of a mortal's history religious influences first begin to take effect upon the soul,—especially in our own country, where christian truth exerts a power upon us from our earliest childhood. In seeking to unweave the web of our own experience, it would be difficult to decide when the thread of religious influence first came to be a constituent.

Thirdly: *From taking account of the hidden operations of divine grace in others, we are shut out by necessity:—for God only “searcheth the heart.”* And from a careful survey of these movements in our own breast, we are prevented by our levity and worldliness. Were we able, and had we the disposition, to watch how silently and mysteriously God by His spirit enters human hearts, and gradually melts their hardness; how He first lets fall a ray of heaven-born light upon a mind in darkness, and from that point shines more and more unto the perfect day; how He first, negatively, subdues principles of rebellion, disarms prejudice, removes the evil bias of the will, and then favorably disposes the mind, begets the good desire, and leads to a love and embrace of “the truth”; we should see the beauty and force of the similitude—“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven,” &c.

Fourthly: *But considered as applying purely to the period of christian experience,—from the entrance into spiritual life, to the perfecting of christian character, we see much that is interesting and instructive in the point of analogy under consideration.*

In the various stages of christian progress, or growth in grace, we see by external signs there is a work within; but the immediate agency, by which the work is wrought, is impalpable to sense. By the falling away of evil habits and tempers, and propensions, we know there is an undermining process going on; and from the moral character of the effects, we may learn the character of the effective cause. But we learn this by inference. From godliness without, we safely conclude God is within; but these things are but the out-workings of the gospel leaven, which a divine hand has hid deep down in the heart, and which is going on to transmute the entire nature from sin to holiness. The external appliances of the evangelical system have a purpose to serve in the renovation of our depraved world, but that purpose is only secured in proportion as the inward—the unseen power of divine grace is effectual in the soul. Spiritual

christianity—the true “kingdom of God,” in nature, in essence, is wholly independent of everything circumstantial and material; though its interests may be, and are, in the present constitution of things, promoted by circumstantial appliances. But the seen and the felt of christianity may be invested with all available authority, and brought to bear upon guilty and depraved man with all the energy at command; but unless the spiritual—the unseen—the “leaven” of gospel truth, go down to the depths of the human heart, and from the centre of man’s moral nature work its way to the outermost verge, imbuing the whole with its own moral and spiritual qualities, man remains a slave to sin, depraved in heart, and wholly destitute of that “righteousness and peace and joy,” which constitute the “kingdom of God” in the soul.

We come to consider—

II. THE ASSIMILATIVE POWER OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

First: *The gospel comes to conform human nature to its own temper and principles.* The change is not one of *degree*, but of *nature*. It would be more proper to call it a *re-making*, than a *re-moulding* of, humanity. Hence St. Paul—“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation,”—*καὶνὴ κτίσις*.

This process of conformation may be said to commence as soon as divine grace is allowed to take effect in the soul,—even previous to what is termed conversion; though up to this point the process is mainly *negative*, if the phrase, negative conformity, may be allowed. It consists chiefly in the removal of impediments preparatory to the great transition. Genuine repentance manifests itself in such negative work. It deals especially with the past,—in sorrowing for sin, in battling with evil propensions, with carnal lusts and appetites, in seeking to break away from inveterate habits which war against the soul. The gospel begins to take effect *positively* when pardon is realized. Then the elements of a new life are introduced, the outlines of a new character are

formed; and the convert is called upon by diligence in prayer, in watchfulness, in the use of all those means and privileges which God has ordained to this end, to fill up these outlines, to mature and perfect the incipient life of holiness, until the image of God be fully formed within, and a renewed, sanctified, life on earth attests a preparedness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Secondly: *The assimilative process is not equally rapid in all cases.* Many reasons enter into the explanation of this fact. Diversity of circumstances is, doubtless, to be considered. So also are peculiarity of temperament, previous habits and sentiments, different degrees of moral susceptibility, with many others of which, perhaps, we know nothing. One thing is certain, the good work is either *progressive* or *retrogressive*. The positive amount of gain or loss may not be cognizable at any given moment, but if we were careful to strike the balance at certain fixed periods, we should see our gain or loss in the aggregate. Manifold and pressing are the demands upon our devout attention in seeking to attain to the stature of men in Christ Jesus. A growing conformity to the moral likeness of the Saviour requires a meek and prayerful habitude of soul, a teachable disposition, a living with the eye of faith ever uplifted to *Him*, who lives to guide, and save, and sanctify, every humble and obedient spirit.

Briefly we may consider the next point of analogy, which teaches—

III. THE EFFECTUALNESS OF TRUE RELIGION. “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.”

First: *Here it is necessary to mark the point at which the analogy fails; lest we should entertain the notion that saving grace is irresistible in the soul of man; that we are purely passive in the great work of salvation, and that the transforming process having once began, must necessarily be consummated.* The parable has been made to favour this idea,

by pushing the analogy to an unaccountable length, thus offending against the first principles of biblical interpretation. True, the leaven operated, and the whole *mass* became irresistibly "leavened." But this, though in the main, a striking and expressive simile, fails to reach the case of a moral agent, acted upon by moral truth. We have no sympathy with the theory of man's perfect passivity; believing it to be opposed to the first principles of a sound theology, and a living contradiction to the simplest elements of our moral constitution. With the yielding up of man's resistive power even to the work of the Holy Spirit, we must yield his amenability to the bar of God, and thus be forced to deny some of the plainest teachings of inspired truth. It is impossible that God should hold man responsible for that which he is not free to use or abuse. If man be absolutely passive material, then must he be, what influences from without are suited to make him; and no more can he be arraigned at the tribunal of divine justice for the moral and spiritual dispositions of the mind, than for the functions of his physical organization. Man is free, and therefore accountable; and no theory can be more degrading and more terribly dangerous, than that which robs him of his rational responsibility, and thus sinks the human species to the level of the brutes that perish.

Secondly: *It may be affirmed, then, on the authority of reason and scripture, which are ever one when rightly interpreted, that the "leaven" of the gospel is effectual at man's option; and that it is in fostering or frustrating its sanctifying power—his responsibility to God, in the highest sense, consists.*

"Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently *but not compels*.
Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees;
Man is the maker of immortal fates."

Thirdly: *This premised, we might insist at length upon the completeness of that change which the gospel proposes to effect in the soul.* Gradual the process may be, but complete it must

be, before man can enter heaven. "Without holiness, no man can see the Lord." The terms of the gospel cannot be compromised. No darling lust is to be spared ; no long and dearly cherished affection for sin can abide in the heart ; no deep and inveterate habit or principle opposed to the mind of Christ may survive. "The old man" must be wholly "put off," and "the new man put on, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Fourthly: *Much controversy has been evoked as to when this perfectness in Christ may be attained.* One simple fact, or principle, candidly considered, might have spared much profitless contention on this point. It is granted, on all hands, that such perfection is necessary ; and further, that such perfection is possible : for throughout the evangelical records, the blessing is matter of command, and prayer, and promise ; but it is worthy of remark, that never once is it made *a question of time*. The first preachers of christianity appear to have regarded the redemptive economy as complete, —wanting no appliances to ensure success ; invested with all requisite authority and power, to subdue sin and make man holy. Not at certain given periods and under certain circumstances merely, but at all times, and under all circumstances, the gospel was preached as the power of God unto full salvation. And does not this stand to reason ? Why talk of purgatory, or invest a death-bed scene with some wonder-working charm to wipe pollution from the soul, as long as the ever-accessible fountain is open to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness ? If it be yet true that "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin," we need no magical nor material agency. We reject such inventions, not only as unscriptural, but irrational ; and seek the purification of our consciences from dead works by a penitent and believing application for that divine Spirit, whose high office it is to make man meet for the paradise of God.

JOSEPH HYNE RYLANCE.

Paris.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SEVENTEENTH SECTION.—*Matt.* vii. 15—20.

The Underlying Element of Moral Character.

THERE is one thing of primary importance to every man; and that is moral CHARACTER. There are four things which show this.

First: *Moral character is man's only real property.* Man has nothing that he can call, in strict truth, his own, but this. His land, houses, money, are his only in a very inferior sense. Nor is his existence his. His being, with all its powers of body and mind, is the property of the eternal Creator. "All souls are mine," says the ABSOLUTE ONE. But moral character is the product of man's free and independent agency. It is his creation; it never would have been, had he not existed. God claims man's existence, but not his character; if the character is evil, he holds man to blame; if good, he allows man the praise. Your character is *yours*, though parents, friends, society, heaven and hell, have contributed to its formation. You are its rightful and *exclusive* owner.

Secondly: *Moral character is the only measure of man's real worth.* Conventionally, men are regarded as great or otherwise, according to the power of their genius, the extent

of their attainments, the amount of their social influence, or the magnitude of their secular possessions. But, really, in the sight of the holy universe, and in the estimation of "the judge of all the earth," man is great or otherwise, according to the texture and quality of his moral character. If that character embody the great principles of social rectitude and godliness, then, though a hut be your home and penury your lot, you are *great*—angels are your willing servants, Jesus calls you brethren, and the ETERNAL rejoices in you as His children.

Thirdly: *Moral character is the only earthly product man will bear with him to the other world.* Our earthly possessions, our home, our friends, and even our body, we must leave this side of Jordan; for "naked came we into the world and naked must we return." But moral character we bear with us to the other side, and ever with us: whilst reason and consciousness endure will it continue.

Fourthly: *Moral character is the source whence springs our lasting weal or woe.* The germ of paradise or the fuel of hell is enwrapped in every character. Character will prove to every man, either an Eden, where the spirit of beauty will appear in endless forms of enchantment, and goodness cluster in richest fruits; or a Hinnom, whose corruptions poison the air, "feed the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is never quenched." "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap: he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap everlasting life."

Such then is the transcendent importance of *character*; and the chief glory of christianity is its relation to it. Its design is to produce in man a holy character: in other words, to transform the human soul into the image, and elevate it to the fellowship and enjoyment, of the great God. Hence Christ, its author, constantly spake of character—was ever warning men of the false, and urging them to the true. In the passage before us he alludes to the *underlying, or germinant, element* of moral character.

The words suggest four thoughts in relation to this foundation of moral character :—

I. THAT IT IS A VITAL PRINCIPLE OF ACTION. It is not a dormant element. It was something vital in these “false prophets,” that prompted them to “come in sheep’s clothing”; something vital, both in the “good” and corrupt “tree,” which *operated* to the production of fruit. These allusions authorize us to infer that what the governing instinct is to a brute, and what the vital sap is to the tree, the *disposition* of man is to his character. We have frequently stated that every man is under the sway of some *propensity* or other, whatever it may be; in any case it is evermore the source of character. It is his *moral* heart, out of which are the issues of his life.

This underlying element of character, like the principle of life in all forms, *assimilates* everything to itself—turns everything into its own essence. Life in the tree turns everything it appropriates into tree, life in the animal turns everything it appropriates into animal. The rose transmutes all into rose, and the vine all things into vine; the wolf all things into wolf, and the man all things into man. It is the principle of life that does this. Now, the primary element of a man’s character—the controlling disposition, acts ever in this way. If that principle be sensual, it turns everything into sensuality; if selfish, it turns everything into avarice; if religious, it turns everything into religion. Like the sap of the tree, this principle of character, runs into every branch of life, produces, shapes, colours, every part.

This passage suggests another thing concerning this underlying element of character :—

II. THAT IT IS EITHER RADICALLY CORRUPT OR GOOD. It is implied here, that a tree, even apart from its fruits, is either “good” or “corrupt.” The fruits are the effects, not the essence, of the tree. It is so in relation to character. Man is good or bad, according to the moral quality of this

principle of action ; and that even apart from his outward acts. His external deeds are no more his character, than the fruits of a tree are the tree. It is not so much what I have *actually* done or not done, as what I have *wished* and *willed*, that determines the quality of my character. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Now, this fundamental principle is either "good" or "corrupt": there is no middle quality—no neutralism, in morals. There are two, and but two, attractive forces in the moral world,—truth and error, right and wrong, Satan and God ; and all souls point to one of these as steadily as the needle points to the pole. Souls, like pendulums in motion, are everlastingly moving to one of two points. "Ye cannot serve two masters,—God and mammon." "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad."

Another thing suggested by this passage in relation to this underlying element of moral character is :—

III. THAT WHEN IT IS CORRUPT, IT IS GENERALLY DISGUISED. The wolf comes "in sheep's clothing." Man has the power to mis-represent his heart. He can make a moral masque and wear it, so as to deceive the very elect. But mark you, it is the *evil* principle which he disguises, not the good ; it is the wolf that puts on the "sheep's clothing," not the sheep the wolf's. Vice always puts on the robes of virtue, and error speaks the language of truth ; but never the reverse. In sooth, the "corrupt" principle dares not fully show itself ; a bad man is bound by his badness to act the hypocrite. He is seldom just to his own depraved principles ; he lacks the courage, he is too great a coward, to act them out in the sunlight of social life. Where is the debauchee that dare publish to the world the whole of his filthy thoughts ? Where is the dishonest tradesman or professionalist, who would avow all his schemes of chicanery and craft ? Where is the infidel that would venture to act

fully out all his views and feelings before the eyes of his fellow men? The truth is, unless a wicked man concealed, in some measure, his principles, and put on some of the outward forms of virtue, he would not be able to hold up his head in society. He would be shunned as a demon, and left to pine away a wretched life in dark and chilly isolation. To the honor of the moral intuitions of humanity and of goodness, let it be proclaimed that a good man alone can be faithful to his principles and afford to be *un-hypocritical*. He alone can be open and natural; goodness, like the wide-spread landscape, expansive ocean, or the open heavens, unfolds itself to all, and is most beautiful when most exposed.

But Christ, in the passage before us, refers to the corrupt principle as being under the disguise of *religion*, and under the disguise of religion in its highest form. It appeared not merely in the character of a *saint*, but in the character of a "*prophet*." "Beware of false *prophets* that come to you in sheep's clothing." Jesus referred to the Jewish teachers of his day, who sat in the seat of Moses. In the name of divine truth they inculcated vain traditions; in the name of benevolence they sought their own selfish ends; in the sacred name of religion they wrought out their own worldly aims. Evil has often robed itself in this attire. Every age has had its hypocrites in the pew, and its false prophets in the pulpit. This, instead of being an objection to religion itself, is an argument in its favor. It is sin's homage to holiness. For does not imitation always imply, in the imitator, faith in the excellence of the original? Whenever a character of distinguished excellence has arisen in any department of life—politics, science, or art, as well as religion; has there not always followed a host of sciolists and quacks?

Another thing suggested by the passage in relation to this underlying element of character is:—

IV. THAT WHENEVER DISGUISED IT MAY, AND SHOULD, BE DETECTED. "By their fruits ye shall know them," &c.

First : *It may be detected.* How? “By their fruits.” The fruits are the test. But what is the fruit of a man’s soul? Fruit is the natural production of a tree; it embodies and expresses its essence. Hence *all* the acts of men cannot be regarded as the *fruits* of the inner life. Sometimes human actions have no vital connexion with the inner governing principles of the heart. Men, sometimes, act against their will; sometimes without their will; they are sometimes the creatures of necessity, and sometimes the dupes of mistake. The actions, therefore, which can only be regarded as the criteria must be those which are *fruit*—the natural production, exponents, and embodiment, of the moral principle. The *fruitful* actions of a man are the average and spontaneous doings of his life. We would not judge a tree by its productions; one year it may fail, and yet be a good tree. So with man’s character, you must strike the average of his deeds. You must deal with it as the philosopher deals with nature, the theologian with the Bible, the judge with the evidence—look upon the whole. The average conduct then, and not the occasional deed, is the fruit by which you are to test the inner principle of a man’s heart. This is the tongue of his soul.

This test is (1.) infallible. “Do men gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles?” In the material world, like causes always produce like effects. Men reap what they sow; every tree beareth after its kind. This law holds good in the moral sphere;—a corrupt heart will have a corrupt life. It is true that the mere occasional acts of a man may not agree with his inner principles; but his general conduct, which is the *fruit* of his being, will ever fairly represent them. (2.) The test is universal in its application. “Every tree,” &c. It is not some particular tree that produces fruit after its own kind, but every tree; so it is not some particular man, whose average conduct expresses his heart, but it is the case with all men. He, for example, who can live without prayer, whose whole energies are engaged, and whose time is engrossed, in worldly pursuits and pleasures—whatever his professions—is destitute

of piety. Aye, the heart will out in the life, however strict the guard set over it. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

But this test will apply to other things besides character. It will apply to *systems of religion*. You may test Deism, Paganism, Islamism, Mormonism, Christianity, &c., by their fruits. It may be applied also to *particular doctrines* of christianity. You may test predestination, justification by faith, &c. by their fruits. It may be applied, also, to the *methods of promoting christianity*. The comparative value of the voluntary and coercive principles employed in the promotion of christianity may be determined by their fruits.

Secondly: *It should be detected*. "Beware," &c. Why should it be detected? (1.) Because the *evil* principle is highly pernicious to others. The primary element of a corrupt character is a *devouring* instinct. Christ compares the false prophets to the "ravening wolves." The allusion seems to be, to the ferocity and subtilty of these creatures in seizing the unsuspecting sheep and feasting a savage appetite upon their blood, regardless of their cries and agonies. As the wolf lurks in the day and prowls forth in the night on its mission of death, so corrupt men misrepresent their principles in order to gratify their malevolent instinct. Like Joab, they profess friendship in order to stab between the ribs; or, like Judas, they kiss in order to betray. Hence the importance of being on our guard—of seeking to detect the corrupt everywhere; especially when it assumes the character of prophets,—for then it is most dangerous. Let us try the spirits to see whether they are of God; and try them not by their words, however scriptural, or their mien, however devout; but by their *fruits*. Moreover, we should "beware." (2.) Because the *evil* principle is destructive to its possessor. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." This evil principle in man *insures* ruin, it produces a character only fit for the flames, it is the hell of the soul. BEWARE!

Gems of Thought.

SUBJECT: *Moses and the Burning Bush; a Picture of a True Student and the Bible.*

“And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt,” &c.—Ex. iii. 2-6.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-seventh.

THE circumstances connected with this extraordinary incident suggest four general facts:—

First: *That God's purposes are punctual in their accomplishment.* If you refer to the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, you will find God declaring to Abraham that his seed should go into a strange land,—referring to Egypt, that they should be slaves in that land, and that the people of the land should “afflict them for four hundred years,” and that afterwards they should “come out” with great substance. The clock of time had now struck the four hundred years, and God forthwith began to redeem his pledge. Wonderful things had occurred in the history of the race during that period. Several generations had come and past away. Nations had arisen and disappeared; but amidst all the revolutions, God remembered his promise to Abraham. There was nothing just now in the circumstances of the Israelites to indicate the deliverance; for although death, the ruthless conqueror of all, had deposed one of Egypt's tyrannic monarchs, another, as tyrannic, had assumed his place. Perhaps, the chain of despotism the Jews had never felt to be heavier and tighter than now, and the gloom of their oppression was never more dense; “they sighed by reason of

their bondage;" their groans, wafted by the winds, mounted aloft into the ear of the Lord God of Sabbaoth. It was now, as ever;—in proportion to the depths of distress was the nearness of deliverance. When the shades of the night are most dense and dark, then the dawn of the morning is about to burst. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Let us have faith in God's promises. There is an hour appointed for the fulfilment, and when it dawns, the blessing will come. He is punctual; his promises, like the wheeling planets, are never out of time. To man they may appear tardy in their fulfilment;—"but the Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness." We measure time by artificial chronometers and the revolutions of planets; but God, by the evolution of principles. "One day with Him is as a thousand years," &c.

The circumstances of this extraordinary incident suggest:—

Secondly: *That God's purposes, in relation to our world, are generally accomplished by the agency of man.* The Almighty could have emancipated the Jews by his own immediate volition, or he might have selected other instrumentality than human;—but he elected man for the work. *God helps man by man.* Is the race to have a revelation from its maker? It must come through man. Is the depraved and lost race to be restored to the knowledge, friendship, and image, of its maker? Man must be the agent—The great redeeming God-man must atone for its faults, and renovate its heart. Is the gospel of Christ to be preached to all the world for a witness to all people? Man is to be the messenger. This is God's plan of raising and saving humanity; and in it we discover great wisdom and love.

Another fact which this extraordinary incident suggests is:—

Thirdly: *That the men whom God employs for the carrying out of his purposes, he qualifies by a special revelation.* The work to which Moses was now called, was a work requiring dauntless heroism, self-sacrifice, and power. He was to confront Egypt's proud monarch, and, single-handed,

grapple with the mightiest despotism in the world. Whence was he to derive this power? The power of the human mind depends upon the thoughts and ideas it receives from the divine, as the vitality and power of the branch depend upon its connexion with the root : all mortal mind is powerless for good without ideas from God. To supply Moses with these ideas, God gave him, now, a special revelation. As he trod the Arabian plains, guarding flocks not his own, his attention was arrested by the burning bush, from which he received communications from the Infinite. It was in solitude that he had this special revelation. Ah! Solitude has ever been the school where moral heroes have been trained. Daniel was schooled into a prophet upon the lonely banks of the Ulai; John was trained to receive and transcribe the visions of future ages on the lonely island of Patmos; and Paul was trained to be the great apostle of the Gentiles in some sequestered spot of Arabia.

Another fact suggested by this extraordinary incident is :—

Fourthly : *That this special revelation, which He vouchsafes, is frequently symbolical in its character.* A large amount of the communications which He made to the Jewish people were of this description. What were all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion but symbols of truth—adumbrations? All nature is a symbol. Truth in symbol, is *palpable, attractive, impressive*. The burning bush was a symbol. But what did it symbolize? GOD'S PRESENCE. Light was ever the emblem of God amongst the Easterns, and especially amongst the Jews. This light was the Shekinah; it gleamed from the sword at the gate of Eden; it radiated from the pillar that conducted the Israelites through the wilderness; it shone over the mercy seat; it moved like a star in the horizon to the wise men, guiding them to the birth-place of Jesus; it shed a mystic lustre on Tabor in the hour of transfiguration. Now, this same light—this emblem of God, we think, descended upon this bush, so that the whole seemed to be in flames.

Having made these remarks, we shall regard *Moses and the bush* as an emblem of a true student and the Bible.

Observe him—

I. DIRECTING HIS EARNEST ATTENTION TO THE DIVINE REVELATION. “And Moses said I will turn aside and see this great sight.”

First: *Moses directs his attention to it, under an impression of its greatness.* It was truly a marvellous object. A bush burning far away from the habitation of men was a strange scene; but to see a bush bursting into flame at once, ignited by no visible hand, blazing away and yet not consumed, but all its branches and foliage continuing fresh and green amidst the devouring element, was marvellous indeed.

But wonderful as this was, it is but a faint shadow of the marvellousness of the BIBLE. The very *fact* of its existence is a wonder; and its every page is filled with wonders. It is a record of the WONDERFUL,—“of God manifested in the flesh.” “Into which angels desire to look.” Mediation in the universe, like the burning bush in the desert, is that great radiant fact to which the highest minds “turn aside” in rapt wonderment and awe. Now, the true student, like Moses, ever directs his attention to divine revelation, under the profound impression of its greatness. He does not take up the Bible as he takes up other books.

Secondly: *Moses directs his attention to it in order to ascertain its import.* He wished to know, “WHY the bush is not burnt.” He did not stop merely to gaze, but to enquire. He was not satisfied with the *what*; he sought the *why*. It is ever so with a true student of the Bible. He will not be satisfied with a mere acquaintance with the forms and circumstances of the subjects of the Bible; he will enquire into the import, and seek to find out “the reason of things.” There are some who imagine that by degrading reason, they exalt the Bible:—the mischievousness of their influence is only equalled by their absurdity and ignorance. The Bible is nothing to man, apart from the exercise of his

reason ; and it becomes *powerful* to him, just as he enquires into the *wherefore* of its facts. The *why* is the key which unlocks the choicest treasures of divine truth.

Observe Moses :—

II. HOLDING INTERCOURSE WITH GOD THROUGH THE DIVINE REVELATION. “God called to him out of the midst of the bush,” &c.

First: *God's communications depended upon his attention.* “When God saw,” says an old and suggestive expositor, “that Moses took notice of the burning bush, and turned aside to see it, then God called to him. If he had carelessly neglected it as an *ignis fatuus*, or *dancing meteor*, a thing not worth taking notice of, it is possible that God would have departed and said nothing to him ; but when he turned aside, God called to him.” The Bible is the great organ of divine intercourse ; but it is the true and devout student only who *looks* and *enquires*—that hears in it the voice of God. The reason why the divine voice is not heard in the Bible now is, because men seldom *enquire* into it,—though they stand to look at it. This bush is burning in this desert-world, but the mass of men pass by it and observe it not.

Secondly: *God's communications were consciously personal to him.* The voice said, “Moses, Moses. And he said Here am I.” There are but few in these days who hear the voice of God to *them* in the Bible. They hear his voice about others, and about the world. But the true student finds himself singled out and addressed in the isolated separateness of his personality. To feel this deep *personalness*—to realize ourselves, as detached from all, and standing in naked loneliness before God, is the first pulsation of spiritual life. “Here am I,” no longer a limb of society but an individual man, to form my own convictions, to fulfil my own functions, and to work out my own destiny.

Thirdly: *God's communications were directive and elevating.* They were *directive*. And he said, “Draw not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place

whereon thou standest is holy ground." He was given to understand that existence was a sacred thing,—that the ground on which he stood was holy. It is said of Dr. Johnson, that he always uncovered his head when he passed a church ; but why did the worthy sage leave it on when treading nature's sacred fields, gazing at the holy stars, or listening to the psalmody of the sea? It is not priests nor bishops that make places holy,—it is God. The communications were not only directive—they were *elevating*. "Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac," &c. This language would probably suggest to Moses, (1.) that his holy ancestors were still in existence : for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living : (Luke xx. 37.) (2.) That the promises which he made to them were about to be fulfilled.

Observe Moses—

III. REALIZING THE PROFOUNDTEST IMPRESSIONS THROUGH THE DIVINE REVELATION. "And Moses hid his face ; for he was afraid to look upon God."

First: *These impressions are peculiarly becoming in sinful intelligences.* It is indeed beseeing in the poorest and the highest intelligences to feel the profoundest reverence at the idea of God. But how much more so in a sinner like man! Elijah "wrapped his face in his mantle" at the manifestation of God. Job abhorred himself "in dust and ashes." Isaiah exclaimed, "woe is me." John fell at His feet as dead. It is sad to see men without aught of reverence for God. The Bible is *designed* to produce this.

Secondly: *These impressions are necessary to qualify men for God's work.* Moses had them for this purpose ; so did Elijah, Isaiah, Saul, and John. Man, without profound impressions of God, has no power for spiritual usefulness. Many preachers speak as flippantly of God, as if they were his equal, and they are powerless on this account.

Thirdly: *These impressions are consonant with the highest dignity and enjoyment.* He that is consciously least is

always greatest. And each seraph covers his face with his wings as he cries, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts."

"The more thy glories strike mine eyes
The humbler I shall lie ;
Thus, while I sink, my joys shall rise
Unmeasurably high."

My Brother, regard the Bible as Moses did the burning bush. It stands out distinguished from all other books, as this bush from all the other plants, and shrubs, and trees, on Horeb's side, or on the wide-spread desert around. It flames with a supernatural light ; the "angel of the Lord" is in it ; and wondrous things thou shalt hear, and feel, if thou wilt turn aside, take off thy shoes, listen and enquire.

SUBJECT:—*The Philosophy of True Courage.*

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," &c.—2 Cor. v. 8-10.

Analysis of *Homily the Hundred and Twenty-eighth.*

THE word "confident" here means courageous.* And courage is a quality of mind which mankind have, not only ever praised and prized, but generally misunderstood. It is often confounded with a reckless indifference to life, a brutal insensibility to danger, and sometimes with desperation itself. In the apostle's sense, it implied two things :—

First : *Unavoidable perils and trials.* What were they ? Turn to the eighth, ninth, and tenth, verses of the preceding

* *Θαράβέω* occurs but in six other places of the New Testament, and in three of these it is rendered "bold,"—the idea we attach to it here. Therefore, we are bold, intrepid, courageous, &c.

chapter: "We are troubled on every side," &c. True courage implies, not only dangers, but *unavoidable* dangers. The man that rushes into danger is not courageous, but *reckless*.

Courage, in the apostle's sense, implied :—

Secondly: *Intelligent views and convictions of being*. Much of what is called courage on the battle-field, springs from an utter ignorance of what existence is; or at any rate, an entire destitution of all true views upon the question. But what were Paul's views of being?—the data-views from which he draws this "*therefore*"? Looking at the preceding verses, we discover four general ones.

(1.) *He regarded the body as the organ of being*. He speaks of the body as a "house"—an "earthly house"—a "tabernacle," and also, a *clothing*.

(2.) *He regarded the soul as the personality of being*. "WE that are in this house." His idea is, that the body is no more the man, than the house is the tenant, or the clothing the wearer. We may change our dwellings and our garments a thousand times, and yet be the same. The soul, not the body, is the *I*, or *self* of being.

(3.) *He regarded death as only a change in the mode of being*. A mere change in the house and garment.—not the extinction of the tenant or the wearer.

(4.) *He regarded heaven as the perfection of being*. It is "the house not made with hands eternal, in the heavens,"—the life that would *swallow* up death,—the being "present with the Lord." Such are, *generally*, his views, as developed in the context.

But in the text these views are repeated in a somewhat modified, and in a more condensed form; and they enable us to say that the apostle's courage was based on three things:—

I. A CONSCIOUSNESS THAT HIS DEATH WOULD NOT ENDANGER THE INTERESTS OF BEING. That which gives a *fear-awakening* power to events, is the dread of *death*. The most malignant

disease would awaken no fear, were there not a dread of death in the patient. The fiercest hurricane that ever rushed on the bark of a mariner, or the loudest roar of musketry or cannon on the field of strife, would have no fear-awakening power without this. Let the fear be taken away, as it would assuredly where there was a consciousness that death would endanger no interest of being, and a man would then, like Paul, be *always* courageous.

Now, just observe the apostle's view of the interests of being, and the bearing of death upon them.

First: *Notice Paul's view of the interests of being.* In what did he consider the highest interest of man to consist? In being "*present with the Lord*:" implying a scene where the Lord's presence is especially enjoyed. The highest aspiration of a loving heart is to be with the object of its love.

Secondly: *Notice Paul's view of the bearing of death upon the interests of being.* He regarded death as the flight of the spirit to the presence of its Lord. "Absent from the body," &c. A view of death this, opposed to the various errors of *annihilation—purgatory—soul-sleep.*

Thirdly: *Notice Paul's state of mind under the influence of these thoughts.* "Willing rather," &c.

The apostle's courage was founded—

II. ON A CONSCIOUSNESS THAT DEATH WOULD NOT DESTROY THE GREAT PURPOSE OF BEING. One of the great features that distinguish a rational, from a non-rational, existence is, that the former acts from a *purpose*, and the other does not—being the mere servant of blind instinct. Now, life is precious to a man, just in proportion to the *felt* importance of his *grand* purpose. Men without purpose, are almost indifferent to life. Hence too, the young man clings to life with a greater tenacity than the old, because he has but just committed himself to a purpose. The old has either fulfilled his purposes or renounced them; and he feels that he is too near the grave to form others. He is purposeless,

and being so, life has but little hold upon his interests. A man's sympathies and soul run into his purpose. He *lives* in his purpose.

The master purposes of men differ very widely. The object of some, is pleasure ; of others, wealth ; of others, to please God. This was Paul's grand purpose. "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

First : *This purpose is reasonable.* If there be a God, reason dictates, that to please Him ought to be the *supreme* purpose of intelligent natures.

Secondly : *This purpose is delightful.* The highest happiness of a moral intelligence, is to please the *chief* object of its love.

Now, observe, death does not destroy this purpose. Death destroys the main purposes of the voluptuous, avaricious, and ambitious ; and hence it is terrible to them : but it does not destroy the chief purpose of the christian. "Whether present or absent"—in all worlds and times—his chief purpose will be, to be "accepted of Him."

The apostle's courage was founded—

III. ON A CONSCIOUSNESS THAT DEATH WOULD NOT PREVENT THE REWARDS OF BEING. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," &c. *Success*, whilst it should never be regarded as the rule of conduct, nor the test of character, must ever have an influence upon the mind of man in every department of labour. Non-success discourages. He, who in any sphere of worldly service, meets not with success, soon gets disheartened. It is both natural and right to look for it.

The christian labourer looks for it ; but it does not appear here, at all proportioned either to his ardent desires, his costly instrumentality, or his self-denying efforts. Paul, no doubt, would like to have seen the full results of his labours in Philippi, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, &c. ; and if death could have prevented a full realization, he would have

esteemed it an evil, and shrunk from it with fear. But here he distinctly affirms an opposite conviction. "For we must all appear," &c. As if he had said, Although I am anxious to see the good results of my labours, and have seen but little, comparatively, as yet, *I shall see them in the future!* "For we must all appear," &c.

First: *Every one shall receive the recompense of labour.* "We must all appear," &c. If some were to be absent, the doubt might awaken distress. A man might say, Some will appear in the great future to receive a *reward*, but I do not know whether I shall be there or not; and the doubt disturbs me.

Secondly: *Every one shall receive a reward for every deed.* For every good deed. There shall be no lost labour. And every "bad" deed, too, shall be recompensed. The apostle introduces the "bad," not in order to explain his courage and illustrate his general point, but rather, we think, to prevent a wrong conclusion being drawn from its omission. If he had spoken only of the "good" deed, it would have answered the purpose of his argument; but then it might have been inferred, that there would be no recompense for the "bad."

From all we have stated, it would appear that the apostle had the best of reasons for "always being confident," or courageous. True courage is a blessed thing. To stand fearlessly in peril, to rise buoyant above the pressure of trials, to struggle bravely against the opposing forces of life, to pursue duty over a stormy sea, or through a perilous road, and face death itself with a firm heart and a placid spirit, is a truly blessed thing. If we possess Paul's convictions of life and his spirit, we may have this sublime courage. Let us look at death, as he looked at death—as the flight of the spirit into the presence of its Lord. Is not fear of death a disgrace to the christian? "If," said Cicero, "I were now disengaged from my cumbrous body, and on my way to Elysium; and some superior being should meet me in my flight and make the offer of returning and remaining in my

body, I should, without hesitation, reject the offer : so much should I prefer going to Elysium to be with Socrates, and Plato, and all the ancient worthies, and to spend my time in converse with them." How much more should the christian desire to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord."

SUBJECT :—*The Two Greatest Gifts ; or, the Gift of the Spirit as Great a Display of Divine Love, as that of the Son.*

"He gave his only begotten Son," &c.—John iii. 16.

"He hath given us of his Spirit."—1 John, iv. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Twenty-ninth.

THESE passages present to our minds God's greatest gifts to mankind. Our object in bringing them thus together is to show, that *there is as much divine love displayed in the gift of the Spirit as there is in the gift of the Son.*

This is a point we are, probably, prone to overlook. We often think and speak of God's love in the gift of His Son, and never can we be too much impressed with it ; but His love in the gift of His Spirit does not so frequently engage our attention, nor it is to be feared, so deeply impress our hearts. We shall endeavour to illustrate our subject by four remarks.

I. THE SPIRIT IS AS INTRINSICALLY GREAT AS THE SON. The Son is great,—transcendently great. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily." But the spirit is *equally* great. The same attributes are ascribed to Him, the same prerogatives belong to Him, and the same divine works are referred to Him. If you test, therefore, the extent of love by the greatness of the gift, you have as much in the one case as the other.

II. THE SPIRIT IS AS ACTIVELY ENGAGED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WORLD AS THE SON. Christ was active when on earth

for the world. He seems to have devoted every hour to the great work. "I must work the works of him that sent me," &c. But has not the Spirit been active? Did he not strive with the old world? Did he not inspire the men who wrote this Book? Has there ever been a soul regenerated and saved without His agency? Has there ever been a conscience that He has not touched? In *every* solemn thought and expression of every mind, is He not working?

III. THE SPIRIT HAS BEEN AS WICKEDLY TREATED BY THE WORLD AS THE SON. The cruel treatment which the Son received is recorded in this book, and will be transmitted to all future ages as the most humiliating and astounding exhibition of human depravity. But the ill-treatment of the Spirit has been as wicked, and far more *extensive* and *lasting*. The people of Judea, alone, *personally* ill-treated Christ; the population of the world "do always resist the Spirit." About thirty-three years measured the period of our Saviour's personal ill-treatment. The ill-treatment of the Spirit extends over well nigh twice that number of centuries.

IV. THE SPIRIT IS AS NECESSARY FOR MANKIND AS THE SON. Two things are necessary to man's salvation; deliverance from the *punishment* of sin, and from the *power* of sin. Christ was necessary for the first, and the Holy Spirit for the second.

"It is sometimes said, in opposition to the doctrine of the *necessity* of the Spirit's agency, that a man wants nothing but sufficient evidence, and the free use of his own faculties, to believe. This is readily admitted in relation to every system of truth, but the moral system of revelation. But why should we make this an exception? Do we find any particular circumstances identified with it, antagonistic to faith, which are not found in connexion with other departments of truth? If there are none, the exception is not allowable; but if there are, right reason justifies us in taking it. Such circumstances exist.

"First: *There is moral habit.* The habits which most

persons contract before this system comes fairly under their attention, are such as the whole tenor of its truths condemns ; their habits become their ruling principles, and when assailed, they marshal every power of the soul to their defence.

“Secondly : *There is servile fear.* The man in business, who feels that the current of events is hastening him to insolvency, frequently developes a great reluctance to go into his accounts. In all the world there is no book to him so fearful as the Ledger. It is repulsive to him ; for too well he knows that it will confirm what his foreboding heart suspects ; and what he is afraid to look in the face—afraid to believe. Nothing but sheer urgency will ever induce that man to open that book again, and to read its figured page. Is there not something similar to this in man’s soul, in relation to the Bible ? Often has his conscience whispered that he is on the losing side—that he has contracted a fearful debt with his Maker, —and has nothing to pay. He knows that the full assurance of such a fact would confound him with terror—would fill him with anguish. He quiets his inward monitor. His delusive peace he retains, by persuading himself that the suggestion is not true. Meanwhile, the Bible is presented to him as a book from God. He is told that it will shed light upon the conjectures which have been harassing his bosom, and reveal in daylight to him the whole truth about his state and condition. In such a case, I ask, how is that man likely to regard the document ? Would he dread it as an enemy, or would he hail it as a friend ? Is it not probable that a fear of being convinced of a truth, whose very suspicion has filled him often with pain, would cause him to shun the book which contained it—would prevent him from giving to it that examination, without which he could not ascertain its truths, and therefore could not believe ?

“Thirdly : *There is social influence.* From the great law of sympathy, man is ever influenced by others. The mass of mankind have no faith in Christianity, and therefore the great bulk of human influence runs directly counter to a belief in this system.

“Fourthly : *There is satanic agency.* ‘The God of this world blindeth the eyes of men.’ Now, it may be said, We grant that these moral habits—this latent dread of condemnation—this general current of social influence, and this Satanic agency, are all opposed to faith in Christianity. But are they not found existing in connexion with other departments of truth? I think not. Man’s moral habits are not generally opposed to physical or mental truth. Nor is fear : he is not afraid to look any abstract principle in the face ; the fields of general science and literature he can travel with a buoyant heart and a fearless step. Nor is social influence : the more general intelligence he possesses, the more respect would he command from society. And with regard to Satanic agency, we argue that the more knowledge one obtains, if his heart remains depraved, the more capacity for evil ; and therefore the “prince of darkness” has no end in checking the mere progress of the intellect. One may penetrate the earth’s heart, bring up old worlds to life, and add a thousand centuries to our history. Another may walk the starry vaults, weigh the systems in his balance, and gauge them with his Euclidian lines. A third may enter into the divine arcana of spirit, analyse its operations, and ascertain its laws. What motive could the master-spirit of darkness have to check these noble intellects in their strivings after knowledge? Does he not know right well, that such knowledge, whilst it has no power to destroy moral depravity, has, nevertheless, a capacity to make that depravity less offensive—to enrobe it in beauty, and to invest it with power? But the case is different in relation to Christianity ; the belief of its truths emancipates the spirit from his empire, and raises it into the ‘marvellous light’ of holiness and God.

“If, then, there are circumstances connected with Christianity repugnant to faith, which you find not associated with the general system of mere physical and mental truth, Is it not fair to infer, that whilst, in general, all that a man requires to produce faith is clear testimony and a free intellect, yet that, in relation to Christianity, something else may be ne-

cessary? Yes! and unless it has some auxiliary we may well despair of its ever effecting that moral reformation which it proposes, and which is the great demand of our fallen nature.

“Fifthly: *The agency was strictly moral.* When I say that the Spirit is *necessary*, I mean that he is necessary in a sense *apart from the truth.* There is, indeed, a sense—a sense not sufficiently appreciated—in which that Spirit is in the word. His all-living and life-giving inspirations are here. Are there not fountains of quickening thought, down in “the deep things of God,” never seen—never tasted yet? But it is something more than the *Book-spirit* that I mean—something that uses this as its instrument—*the Spirit Himself.* The human writer infuses his spirit into his book, and whatever influence his book produces upon the mind of the reader, may be called the influence of his spirit. This is sometimes taken to illustrate the doctrine of Divine influence;—but very partial is this representation. So far as the mere influence of the Book-spirit is concerned, there is a parallelism,—but no farther. Infinitely short is this, however, of the Bible-idea of God’s agency. Let us not be deceived by analogies. God’s Spirit is not only *in* the book, but *with* the book. The personal, conscious, spirit of a human author goes not with his work. It may enter regions of which he is ignorant, fall into the hands of thousands, of whom he knows nothing, and receive a million misinterpretations, of which he is happily unconscious. Not so with the author of the Bible. He is everywhere. He pervades the soul of every man who takes it into his hand, and there is not a thought which it awakens with which He is not conversant. Am I to suppose that the Infinite Author, who is thus ever present with every reader of his book, cognisant of every thought which it suggests, having at all times His finger upon every spring of the mind, does nothing to facilitate a right impression of his word? Is He a mere spectator? Has He no interests in the processes and results of the thoughts which His own revelation originates? When the reader is striving after a correct idea of a passage, can He

help? Or is He impotent? Will He? Or is He heartless? I confess that the very supposition that in such a case He exerts no personal agency, is repugnant to my instinctive notions of a God—to all my reasonings, too. He paints the lily—He directs the sparrow in its flight—and, oh, will He not help the struggling soul? The great Parent, will He not solve the questions of his anxious child? Would any human author be thus present with the mind of his reader, having a power to help—help needed—help, perhaps, sought—and not help? ‘If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?’”*

Let us, then, Brother, adore the infinite love of God, as well in the gift of the Spirit as in that of the Son.

SUBJECT:—*The True Life of Humanity.*

“Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”—1 Thes. v. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirtieth.

AMONG the many facts which distinguish man from every other species of animal existence on this earth are, the different modes or forms of life which he adopts and pursues. All the members of every other species of existence live exactly the same kind of life; they are swayed by the same impulses, they contract the same habits, and move with the same bearing, in the same tract.

Not so with men; they differ widely in this respect: some yield allegiance to one impulse, and some to another; some pursue one end, and some another; some form one class of

* We give this extract from a work which we published some five years ago; not merely because it comes to illustrate our present subject, but because it serves to show one or two of our readers, who have informed us that they have been told that we do not believe in “the work of the Spirit,” that such reports are but theological slander, and should be treated as such by our friends.

habits, and some another. The cause of this is, not the fact that man has a larger variety of impulse and faculty than any other species of animal existence, but that he has somehow or other, lost the great *guiding* principles of his being.

There are at least four forms of *human* life around us : (1.) There is the mere *animal* form. This form is developed in the multitude who live merely for appetite. "The things of the flesh" control and mould them. (2.) There is the mere *secular* form. This form is developed in those whose chief aim it is to amass wealth and gain fortunes. (3.) There is the mere *speculative* form. This form is developed in those whose love for abstract studies induces them to give up their existence to reading, meditation, and research. They live in the shadowy realm of ideas. (4.) There is the *christian* form. This form is developed in those "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit,"—who work out all the energies of their being in harmony with themselves, the good of the universe, and the glory of God.

Now, which of these four is *life*—the *true* life of man? Is it the first? No! that is the life of the gross *animalist*—the life of the beast, not the life of man. Is it the second? No! that is the life of the mere *barterer*, not the life of man. Is it the third? No! that is the life of the mere *theorist*, not the life of man. The last only is the true life of man.

To this we shall now call your attention.

I. THAT THE TRUE LIFE OF MAN INVOLVES A VITAL CONNEXION WITH JESUS CHRIST. "Live together with him." The apostle always associated the true life of men with it. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live," &c.

Christ, himself, speaks of the true life of man as being connected with him. "I am the true vine—as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself," &c.

We may be said to live with Christ in two senses:—

First: *Sympathetically*. We say, we are *with* a man when we sympathize with him in any great question, sentiment,

or aim. Indeed without a figure, do we not live with the men who feel as supreme the same thoughts, and pursue as supreme the same aims? Our souls meet and mingle with theirs. The meeting-place of souls is ever the supreme thought and aim. Persons who have not this, though, personally, they live in the same house and room, live not, in the highest sense, "together."

Now, he lives *with* Christ whose *aims* are the same. What is Christ's aim? To spread truth, to glorify God, and promote happiness through the universe—to carry out the divine will. "I have declared unto them thy name," &c. Paul lived *with* Christ in this sense. He had the same aim. He sought to glorify God. He sought to spread truth, &c. He had, too, the same spirit, which was love. "The love of Christ constraineth me." The same kind of love which Christ had—"Constraineth me," &c. "For me to live, is Christ," &c.

Secondly: *Personally*. There is such a thing as fellowship with Christ. "If a man love me, my father will love him," &c. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," &c. And John says, "Our fellowship is, indeed, with the father." Faith pictures Christ, gives him a living form, and brings him into the soul.

If it be said, How can we have fellowship with an invisible being? How do I hold fellowship with you? How with a friend removed by distance? *Words, memorials and writings*, are the media through which we hold fellowship with the distant and, often-times, with the dead.

Now, this is the true life of man. This is a life, in which every part of our nature is fully developed—every desire gratified; a life of which the conscience approves, by which the universe is benefitted, and which will wax in strength and bloom in beauty for ever.

II. THAT THE GRAND DESIGN OF CHRIST'S DEATH WAS TO AWAKEN IN HUMANITY THIS LIFE. "Who died for us."

The death of Christ for the world is the greatest fact.

Hence the apostles discourse so frequently upon His death. But he died for *us*. Millions have died, but they have died *for themselves*.

First : *This fact explains his history*. Notice two things : (1.) He dreaded death ; (2.) Possessed power to avoid it. With these two, the supposition, that he died for himself, renders His history inexplicable. But, when we are told that He died for others, all is clear.

Secondly : *This fact vindicates divine justice*. Men die because they sin. As by "one man, sin entered into the world," &c. We see justice in the death of man. But look at the history of Christ.—He is holy.—He is useful.—He consecrates himself to God. Yet, He dies. Why was it allowed ? On the supposition that such a being died for himself, there is a dark cloud upon the public justice of the universe. But when we are told that He voluntarily died for others, all is clear.

Thirdly : *This fact displays His love*. "He loved us, and gave himself for us." "Scarcely for a righteous man, will one die." &c. Christ died to awaken this right life in humanity. "Unless a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die," &c. *His death is the moral life of humanity*.

"He siezed our dreadful right ; the load sustained,
And heaved the mountain from a guilty world."

III. THAT THIS LIFE, THUS AWAKENED IN HUMANITY, IS INDEPENDENT OF OUR PHYSICAL DEATH. "Wake or sleep." The reference is to the body. There are two reasons for this opinion : (1.) Because the apostle was speaking to those who expected Christ to appear at once. (2.) Because the word "sleep" will not apply to a soul who has *this* life. The body is awake now ; all its senses are opened. In death it is asleep ;—the senses are closed, and the limbs motionless.

These remarks suggest :—

First : *That this life does not prevent dissolution*. We must die. It matters not how holy men are ; they must

die. Moses and Aaron; David, and the prophets; and the apostles, too, have "fallen on sleep." "It is appointed," &c.

Secondly: *That this life modifies physical dissolution.* "Sleep." Who dreads sleep? What weary man does not hail it? The bodies of the blessed are sleeping; and they shall rise—rise refreshed. (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.) It is but *sleep!*

"'Tis but a night, a long and moonless night;
We make the grave our bed, and then are gone.
Thus at the shut of eve, the weary bird
Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
Cowers down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
Then claps his well-fledged wings and bears away."

Thirdly: *That this life survives physical dissolution.* Whether "we wake or sleep." "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord." Death does not interfere with this *life*. It will interfere with the life of the *animalist*, the *secularist*, and the *theorist*; but not with *this*.

SUBJECT:—*The Second Scene in the History of Redeemed Humanity; or, the Age of Moral Triumph.**

"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones," &c.—Rev. xx. 3-6.

Analysis of *Hamily the Hundred and Thirty-first.*

THE first scene in the history of redeemed humanity, namely, the scene of moral struggle, occupied our attention in the last number. The passage before us is a very glorious, though highly symbolical, view of the scene which will

* Continued from p. 47.

succeed it—the scene of moral triumph. This scene is, probably, many long centuries in the future ; for as yet, the great enemy of souls is the “prince of this world.” But prophecy, the tendency of christianity, the victories which the gospel has already achieved, and the unequivocal assurances of God’s word, in general, *all* show that, however far off, the bright era will dawn on the world, when the “will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Stripping the words before us of their highly figurative garb, we discover four great features which will distinguish this glorious age :—

I. THE ENTIRE OVERTHROW OF MORAL EVIL. Satan, the great adversary, is said to be cast into “the bottomless pit.”

This figurative language suggests two thoughts :—

First: *That the great enemy will have lost his stand-place in the world. His throne will have lost its foundation; he will not have a resting place for his foot in this period.* What *had* been his stand-place in the world? Error—prejudice—selfishness—evil passions, &c. : but these will have gone. He will have no fulcrum for his lever.

The language suggests :—

Secondly : *That the fall of the great enemy will be complete for a time.* “Bottomless pit.” He will be sinking for ages. The more humanity progresses in intelligence, rectitude, and holiness, the more hopeless his condition becomes. As humanity rises, he must sink.

Another feature which we discover in this scene is :—

II. THE UNIVERSAL SOVEREIGNTY OF CHRIST. Christ is here spoken of as reigning for a “thousand years.” There are many who judge this passage “after the flesh,” give it a carnal and Judaic interpretation. They infer from it a *personal* manifestation of Christ, with all the appendages of a temporal dominion. We disclaim this, for two reasons :—

First: *The only true sovereignty is spiritual.* Who have been the greatest sovereigns of the world? The men who have sat on thrones of gold, and ruled with the sceptre of force? No! it is not your Pharaoh, Cæsar, Alexander; but your Aristotle, Bacon, Milton, and Bunyan. Men who direct the *thoughts* of humanity are the *real* rulers. Christ is the greatest spiritual sovereign; and this sovereignty is destined to increase.

Secondly: *A righteous spiritual sovereignty over man is the great want of the race.* He who rules the human mind—directs its faculties, energies and feelings, rightly, is man's greatest benefactor. This Christ does in the highest and most perfect manner. Let every philanthropist, therefore, pray that His kingdom may come—that He may become the moral monarch of all souls.

Another feature which we discover in this scene is—

III. THE GENERAL ASCENDANCY OF GREAT SOULS. The world, hitherto, has been under the dominion of weak and wicked men. Its kings and heros have generally been as small, as their hearts have been corrupt. In this scene the *great* soul will be “on thrones,” and reign with Christ.

The words suggest three things about the men who will then be in power:

First: *They will be men who have passed through a spiritual resurrection.* They had a part in the “first resurrection.” That a *spiritual* resurrection is here referred to is obvious, from three considerations. (1.) The idea harmonizes with the symbolical character of the whole book. (2.) The passage specifically mentions “souls,” and not bodies; and, (3.) the New Testament represents the awakening of a new spiritual life in man, as a resurrection. (John v. 24-29; Col. iii. 1. &c.)

Indeed, the resurrection of the body is but a type of the resurrection of the soul—the resurrection of the soul is the true resurrection. That of the body is but figurative. Two ideas are implied in the spiritual resurrection. (1.) *The*

resuscitation of an old moral life in man—divine love. (2.) The resuscitation of an old moral life by God himself. It is God's work alone to raise the dead.

Secondly : *They will be men of martyr-mould.* "The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands." The idea unquestionably is, not that the "souls" of the old martyrs who have long since departed will be brought back to this earth, but souls like theirs will exist in this age. Souls marked by invincible attachment to truth, by most generous sentiment, divine aspirations, and noble daring ; feeling truth to be ever more precious than existence itself. This interpretation agrees with the interpretation which one is bound to give to such scriptural language as that which speaks of the ministry of John, as the ministry of Elijah ; and the conversion of the Jews, as a "life from the dead."

Thirdly : *They will be men possessing exclusive ascendancy.* "But the rest of the dead lived not again." In this glorious age there is no reproduction of those *little and corrupt* men who, in every age, had played the despot, both in church and state. Your Herods and Caiaphases ; your Henrys and your Lauds, will have no representatives in this glorious age. "The rest of the dead lived not again."

Fourthly : *They will be men raised for ever beyond the reach of all future evil.* "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power." Such men are delivered for ever from all the influences, and all the fears, of hell. What an age is this ! Would it had dawned !

Another feature we discover in this scene is :—

IV. THE EXTENSIVE DURATION OF THE WHOLE. "And shall reign with Him a thousand years." If you suppose that this is literal,—that ten centuries are meant, it is a long period for the continuation of *one* moral scene in

man's history. How short was the scene of primeval innocence ! The scene of wickedness, too, is never long without being broken. Conscience is everlastingly breaking in upon, and disturbing, wickedness here. Ten centuries of unbroken holiness and peace for the world are a long period !

But we are disposed to regard the period referred to here as *much longer* than ten centuries. A literal interpretation would not agree either with the general structure of the book, or with this passage. Nor would it fully meet the nature of the case.

We, therefore, regard the period, either as meaning three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, or some vast indefinite period of time. The Jews and other nations were in the habit of using the expression, *a thousand years*, to denote a period of *immense duration*.

First: *This long period of unbroken holiness, is a glorious set-off against all the preceding ages of depravity and sin.* When we think of the past ages of corruption, the millions who, from period to period, have passed away without a knowledge of the gospel ; we are sometimes confounded. But all this may appear but as a few vibrations of a pendulum, when compared with the long ages of universal purity and peace. The lost, perhaps, will be as units to millions, compared with the saved.

Secondly: *This long period of holiness serves wonderfully to heighten our ideas of the grandeur of Christ's work.* Although the influence of christianity, as yet, is confessedly limited, compared with the wide-spread districts lying on all hands beyond its present reach ; still no one who honestly looks at its past history will be disposed to deny that its conquests over the minds, systems, and institutions, of humanity, are unparalleled in the history of religions, and far out-measure the appreciative faculty of the world's greatest intellects. But in the view of the effulgent ages before us, its past most brilliant achievements pale their

fires. Hitherto its rays have only fallen in twilight dimness upon the summit of an isolated mountain here and there; but in the glorious time coming it shall flood the world in warm, cloudless, and life-imparting, light. Oh! let me learn, then, to estimate the greatness of Christ's work, not by what he has done, or is doing, but by those glorious achievements of His, which prophecy has foretold. Let me not judge in this respect before the time. Shall I judge the husbandman just as he commences the cultivation of one of the hundreds of acres committed to his care? Or the architect just as the scaffolding is reared and a few stones brought together? Still less will I dare pronounce upon the work of Christ until in the great eternity I shall behold *redemption finished*.

SUBJECT:—*Sinai and Zion.*

"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words,"—&c. Heb. xii. 18-24.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-second.

BIBLE history resembles a lofty mountain, on one side of which, fierce storms have spent their devastating power; on the other, there are found flowers of freshest fragrance and ethereal hue. The contrast is perfect. Humanity began to climb on the *dark* side of this terrible mount. It was the *only* side available. The way of progress lay right through the midst of this "blackness and darkness." Progress is ever through difficulty. Victory implies battle. Sinai brightens and glorifies Zion through the force of contrast. Though *we* are come to the latter mount, we must not be oblivious of the former one, on which our sires stood and trembled. Remembrance of this fact will heighten

our sense of privilege and responsibility. We value freedom, as we hear in the echoes of memory the bay of the bloodhounds which pursued us in our flight from bondage. The sky of liberty is tinged with celestial beauty, while we contrast it with the thunderous canopy of slavery. So with religion; it is filled with deeper springs of pleasure, and radiant with holier brilliance, as we remember the dryness and darkness of sin's allurements. So too, with the gospel: it is a grander gospel than ever, when contrasted with the terrors of the Sinaic dispensation.

Looking at this magnificent picture, I mark the following prominent outlines:—

I. CHRISTIANITY IS A SPIRITUAL, NOT A MATERIAL, DISPENSATION. "The mount that might be touched," *ψηλαφωμένη ὄρει*, was the type of a material religion. The literal rendering is, "*a palpable mountain*," the words indicating that the religion, thereon proclaimed, was a mass of ritualism, legal service, and physical endurance; and not that spiritual surrender, and inner life of holiness, essentially belonging to the gospel. The religion of Sinai was objective. It was a sublime and overpowering appeal to the eye and the ear. The thunderstruck (*tacto de cælo*) mountain was the symbol of its sensuousness. The Apostle having elaborated this idea, shews that christians have left behind them the barren Arabian mount, and in approaching God have increased the spirituality of their religion. Mount Zion is not intended in this connexion to represent the heavenly state; this is evident from the simple fact that Mount Sinai is never placed as the antithesis of *heaven*, but rather in contrast with the economy of the new covenant. Knowing the nature of this economy, we affirm its spirituality. Then, if christianity is spiritual, let its professors betake themselves to unsparing self-analysis, lest they still cling to the palpable and the sensuous. Get rid of the idea that either "*in this mountain*," or "*at Jerusalem*," men should "*worship the Father*." Recognise the sublime fact, that worship is

independent of *time or place*. Men carry their altar in their hearts. The divine ear is everywhere. The heart is the throne of religion. Piety claims the sovereignty of life. Splendid retinues and glittering garniture do not sanctify service—they give no value to the song or the prayer. The worth of the obedience is commensurate with the depth of heart-love. True devotion makes the whole earth a sanctuary. Every place is consecrated to the good man. The hunted victims of persecution offered as acceptable worship in the fissures of the rock, as they could have done under the dome of the “solemn temple.”

II. THOUGH CHRISTIANITY IS SPIRITUAL IN ITS NATURE, IT EMPLOYS MATERIAL FORMS AS ADJUNCTS. Though we have left one mountain we have come to another. Sinai has given place to Zion. We have not yet done with the palpable and the visible; but—we are quickly leaving them. We have taken a tremendous stride from the mount of terror to the peaks of Zion. Let us, then, be thankful and hopeful: a little longer and all shall be spiritual! We have our material forms, but they are subordinate, not primary—they are bodies, not souls—servants, not lords. We cannot yet dispense with the *pulpit* or the *pew*; they help us onward to the spiritual Canaan. The word that is proclaimed by the human voice cheers and strengthens us. We cannot do without *the Book yet*: its leaves are filled with sacred truth—it has the presence and the power of a directing angel. We are saved, not by the material, but by the spiritual; still the *material* has its peculiar and useful mission.

Noah's heart was filled with reverent thankfulness while in the ark, yet he was constrained to embody that gratitude when again at liberty, in some visible form;—hence on the deluged and desolate world he gathered his family around the rude altar. That altar, at *such* a time, was one of the most magnificent and suggestive sights ever beheld. Beware, lest the *material* is exalted into undue importance. *Spiritual* religion is the only *saving* religion.

III. SINAI AND ZION ARE ONLY MARKS OF PROGRESS, NOT FINAL DESTINATIONS. The home is further onward. Our past victories are only earnest of a universal conquest. We are not yet on the top of the mountain: there are higher peaks bathed in more lucid dew and flashing with diviner light. Upward! Angels beckon us;—God cries, *Higher still!*

We have come to “the heavenly Jerusalem,” that is, the church of the New Testament;—we have come to “an innumerable company of angels;” these are our “ministering spirits;”—we have come to the “church of the first-born,” those who first believed the gospel;—we have come to “God the judge of all,” he is our Father and sovereign;—we have union with the “spirits of just men made perfect,” for we are all “joined in one spirit.” (Eph. ii. 18.) And is this the pinnacle of our achievement? Nay! The apostle lifts the trumpet once more and sounds the sweetest of names—“and to Jesus!” This the crown—this the lofty climax. The strongest pinion falters here; the brightest eye can pierce no higher height.

Jesus is the grand resting point. My business, as a redeemed being, is to know more of my Redeemer. A continual growth in Christ-likeness is the christian’s mission. We have “come” to him in his poverty, humiliation, and death; we must now struggle through to the royalties of heaven. We have loved him on the cross; that love will be eternally perpetuated. Having arrived at Zion, we are, *so far*, on our homeward way;—we are in the avenue leading to the palace. Tarry not here. It is in the *inside* that peace breathes its restful spirit, and that the river of the water of life rolls its salubrious streams.

What learn I, from this rapid outline? (1.) That *privilege* is the measure of *responsibility*. As I am more favoured than the pilgrims of Sinai, so, more is expected from me. (2.) That there is no limit to progress in love and knowledge. There is ever something *new* to discover in Jesus;—his character is as vast as his infinity. Then, immortal soul!

tarry not in thy spiritual pilgrimage ; never rest but *one* moment—and that must be the moment in which thou shalt read thy name “written in heaven” !

Banbury.

JOSEPH PARKER.

SUBJECT : *The Christian Runner in relation to his Spectators.*

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,” &c.—Heb. xii. 1-2.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-third.

THE christian life is often represented as a race. Many passages afford proof of this :—1 Cor. ix. 24-26 ; Gal. v. 7 ; Phil. ii. 16 ; iii. 12-14. There are those who may be regarded as spectators. *Angels, ancient worthies, the church, and even the world,* may be looked upon as parts of that company.

This passage teaches :—

I. THAT THE CHRISTIAN RUNNER IS AN OBJECT OF DEEP INTEREST TO HIS SPECTATORS. This is evident from two things :—

First : *The position of the spectators.* They surround the christian runner. He is said in the text to be “compassed” by them. They see how he *begins, progresses, and finishes.* He cannot throw aside a single glance, relax a single effort, or violate a single condition of the race, without being observed and detected.

Secondly : *The number of the spectators.* That is vast. “So great a cloud of witnesses.” The number of angels, ancient worthies, and pious people, that take an interest in the believer’s course, cannot be computed.

This passage teaches :—

II. THAT THE CHRISTIAN RUNNER SHOULD PUT FORTH GREAT EFFORTS BECAUSE OF HIS SPECTATORS. "Wherefore seeing," &c. "Let us lay aside every weight," &c.

First: *He should divest himself of every encumbrance.* "Lay aside every weight." There are many things that will always act as encumbrances on the christian race-course. *Ceremonialism, religious errors, business perplexities, fear of man, inveterate prejudices, sinful propensities*; all these are so many dead "weights."

Secondly: *He should avoid the sin to which he is most peculiarly prone.* "And the sin which doth so easily beset." *Unbelief* was the besetting sin of the Jews. Against that they were exhorted to guard. It was their most formidable antagonist. We all experience a greater proneness to some sins than to others. *Pride* is a sin to which one is peculiarly prone. It may arise from a constitutional tendency, or from gross ignorance. Wherever it exists it is an evil and should be checked. It hinders improvement; renders the character unlovely; gives a facility to temptation; and is ever a source of great unhappiness. *Covetousness* is the besetting sin of another. He would get and not give. *Intemperance* of a third. The wine cup exercises upon him a bewitching influence. He is convinced of its sinfulness and folly, but finds it difficult to resist. *Evil speaking* is the besetting sin of a fourth. There is a great proneness to talk, and without extraordinary care, to state what is calculated to injure rather than benefit the party spoken of. Hence the exhortation, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren." *Anger* is the besetting sin of a fifth. How difficult for some to restrain this feeling! How easily aroused! On what a slight provocation it will light up the eye and mantle the cheek!

Thirdly: *He should maintain great self-possession.* "Run with patience the race that is set before us." There are many exhortations to patience. "Let patience have her perfect work." "And to temperance patience." There is great need for patience,—in the study of God's word and

government—in watching for the results of christian enterprise—in contending against the prejudices of ungodly men, and in the endurance of the varied ills and vexations of human life.

This passage teaches:—

III. THAT THE CHRISTIAN RUNNER HAS AN OBJECT BEFORE HIM, FROM WHICH HIS THOUGHTS SHOULD NOT BE DIVERTED BY HIS SPECTATORS. “Looking unto Jesus,” &c. Jesus is the object. In looking to Jesus, he has to consider three things:—

First: *The work of Jesus.* “The author and finisher of our faith.”

Secondly: *The history of Jesus.* “Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.” Jesus was once in toil and suffering. He then endured great agony, and despised the shame associated with its instrument. He was sustained in this by the reward He had in prospect. Think upon these facts in His history. Emulate his manliness, and draw inspiration, as he did, from the prize before you.

Thirdly: *The exaltation of Jesus.* “And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” He is now greatly honoured. God, for His patience, perseverance, sufferings, has exalted Him. Even so, ye shall be rewarded if ye “run with patience the race that is set before” you.

R. H.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

No. VII.—CHRYSOStOM.

JOHN, called Chrysostom (*golden-mouthed*), from his remarkable eloquence; one of the most famous of the Greek Fathers; the most popular preacher from the Apostolic Age to the Reformation; the representative of Christianity at the Imperial City of Constantinople, at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century; a zealous assertor of orthodox triunitarianism in that age of controversy, and the founder* of a new and excellent school of Bible interpretation; was born about the year 347, at Antioch of Syria. Antioch was in the midst of a mountainous, well-wooded, well-watered country, with a healthy air. Once the third city of the empire, it had now a population of two hundred thousand. Long celebrated for the refinement which Cicero extols in his oration for the poet Archias—"There was he born, a famous place, formerly a populous city and wealthy, and abounding in great scholars, and the most liberal pursuits"†—now, especially, was it illustrious by the school of Libanius the rhetorician, in this art the model of the Emperor Julian. The parents of John were noble and wealthy. His father, Secundus, served with distinction, as general, in the imperial army of Syria. Secundus died soon after the birth of his only son, leaving Anthusa, the mother, a widow of twenty years. Partly with a regard to the memory of her husband, and partly from the wish to give herself to the training of her son, this lady remained a widow. Pious mothers of that age thought it of much importance to make their children early familiar with the Bible. Thus, at the most susceptible time, the child John received, mingled with every fresh idea, religious truth and feeling from his devout mother. His religion and his faculties unfolded together, so that he appears to have never experienced a violent conversion. To this desirable spiritual history certain features of his doctrine may, perhaps, be traced. A violent conversion disposes to stern paradoxical theology, but a gradual process of maturation, to a theory more comprehensive and serene.

* Wills's Theology and Theologians, p. 28.

† Pro Archia, iii.

At the age of eighteen, John commenced the study of rhetoric under the pagan Libanius, wherein he profited so well, that Libanius, as he lay a-dying, declared, that John had been his most fitting successor, had not the Christians stolen him. To this was soon added philosophy, from a certain Andragathus, and a sojourn in the schools of Athens, where was taught a modified Platonism. On his return, he began to practise as a lawyer, and with some success. But partly from the vigorous revival of early feeling, and partly from the influence of Meletius, the Bishop of Antioch, who, struck with his uncommon powers, longed to see them active in the church, the youth of twenty relinquished his profession to give himself up to theology. Meletius instructed him during three years of constant intercourse in the Bishop's house, and then baptized him and appointed him to the office of reader. Theodore, afterwards Bishop of Mopseustia, and Basil, afterwards of Baphanaea, were his associates and friends; especially the latter, of whom he says, that, whereas he had many real and true friends, who knew the laws of friendship and nicely kept them; Basil excelled them all in friendship, and had the emulation to leave the rest behind as far as they did people who cared nothing for him.* Monachism being now the rage, recommended by the precepts of the philosophers and the example of several Jewish sects, and easily found by willing eyes, both in the Old and New Testaments! our ardent youths resolved, spite of Anthusa's consternation, on solitary life. Her son, however, yielded so far, as, for a time, to practise his austerities in the maternal home. After a while, however, nothing would suffice but a regular monastery, in the mountain solitudes near Antioch. Here, under the superintendence of a venerable Syrian, four years were past in fasting, reading, silence, vegetarianism, and the like luxuries, to mortify the mortal, and etherialize the soul. John, finding even the monastery now short of his ambition, withdrew to an unwholesome cavern, wherein, swinging in a kind of hammock, he prayed, fasted, learned the whole of the Bible by heart, for another two years. By this time the process of mortification was so nearly complete, that, either unwilling to cut off all further opportunity of the like, or, perhaps, at length satiated, John returned to his mother.

He was ordained deacon by Meletius, at about the age of

* De Sacerdotio, I. i.

thirty-three, and presbyter by Flavian, the next bishop, five years after. He often preached as the vicar of Flavian. Though he was acquainted with the speculations of philosophers, his strength lay not in metaphysics. Nature had given him rare qualifications for public speaking; Libanius had cultivated them; the gospel was his theme—and Golden-mouth made himself felt by the Antioch assemblies. He had the highest idea of the sacred dignity of the ministry—as may be seen in his treatise on the priesthood—and he laboured to the utmost to fulfil its functions.

Constantinople had, within the century, entered on its imperial millenium, and was now shewing all the vigour of youth. Orthodox Christianity, which had been protected by Constantine at the Council of Nicaea, had been by Theodosius the Great, established as the religion of the empire. Yet the social religious life of this city was still most variegated. Catholics, heretics, pagans, jostled each other. The bishop of the new metropolis obtained the next rank after him of Rome. The spiritual character of the church had not improved by secular prosperity. In proportion as it was gradually amalgamated with general society, it relaxed its proper strictness, and the old pagan manners survived. Serious abuses crept in amongst the clergy, and great was the need of revival and reformation. Theodosius, dying in 395, is succeeded in the East by his son Arcadius, a weak prince, governed by ministers and by his wife, the empress Eudoxia; beautiful, haughty, and energetic, but superstitious. Nectarius, the successor of Gregory Nazianzen, as Bishop of Constantinople, dying in 397, the eyes of men turn to Antioch, and Eutropius, minister of Arcadius, nominates John to the vacant see. The clergy and people unanimously consent; the emperor issues his mandate, and against his own inclination, John must be patriarch of Constantinople. He was consecrated and enthroned in the February of the following year, by Theophilus of Alexandria, of whom more presently.

John's removal gave a new stimulus to his oratory, and his fame as a preacher grew rapidly. He preached generally twice or thrice in the week, and sometimes every day. People were never weary of listening; the stream of eloquence was often interrupted by cheers and clapping; what fell from him was reported in a kind of short-hand. The great church of St. Sophia, was soon felt to be inconveni-

ently strait. Piety revived, public amusements languished, heretics and pagans were converted. At one of his Easter festivals about three thousand persons were awaiting baptism.

It was impossible that such a soul as John, with stern ideas of purity and righteousness, intent on reform, and audacious in rebuke, could remain long without kindling animosity and drawing persecution. It must not be hidden, that in dealing with heretics and pagans, zeal sometimes drove the archbishop himself—who lived in an age when toleration was not studied—beyond the bounds of discretion. One of his first cares had been to regulate the manners of the clergy. He deposed not less than thirteen bishops at one visitation; he wrote against “spiritual sisters,” enjoining the discontinuance of licentious practices under the garb of religion. His simple way of life enabled his almsgiving to extend. His patrimony and the revenues of the see were expended on the poor and the sick. Whilst this, of course, largely added to the popularity which his preaching had prepared, so that he became the darling of the common people; the clergy felt themselves rebuked by implication, and retaliated by dislike and intrigue. But his most formidable foe, and, probably, the real cause of his subsequent misfortunes, was the emperess. He was not a respecter of the sex. He seemed to delight in shaming females of wealth and rank for their fashionable luxuries. He became the abomination of rich widows. To Eudoxia *this* John was what the Baptist had been to Herodias, what Knox was afterwards to Mary. It was said that in one of his sermons he had compared her to Jezebel.

A disagreement had arisen between Theophilus of Alexandria, an ambitious and crafty, changeable and violent man, and the Origenistic Monks of Nitria, in Egypt. Excommunicated and driven from their retreats, they came to Constantinople, foreboding protection from the philanthropic bishop. Sympathy with the monks, and pity for the misfortune of their gray hairs, led John, without wishing to mix himself with the dispute, to grant them an asylum, yet refusing them communion until he should write to Theophilus. The result was a contest between the two bishops, of character so diverse. Eudoxia at first sided with the monks, and induced the emperor to cite Theophilus to answer for his conduct to the patriarch of the imperial

city. Theophilus arrived at Constantinople in the autumn of 402, and, though cited alone, bringing with him a great number of bishops of his party. John had provided accommodation for Theophilus and his company within the city; but the soured prelate preferred an abode without the walls, and would neither see, nor in any way recognize, his brother. A new thought now flashed before Eudoxia, which she was not slow to act upon. Here was Theophilus, a willing and fit instrument, ready for use against the honest and hated preacher! She changed sides, and induced the emperor to authorize Theophilus to assemble a synod against John. Besides the emperess, there concerted with Theophilus thirty-six of his own bishops, the deposed bishops, the other clerical malcontents, several bribed grandees of the court, and three offended widows. The synod, fearing the people, sat without the city. The charges were chiefly frivolous. John would not appear, unless four bishops, notorious as his foes, were withdrawn. He was, therefore, condemned for contumacy by forty-five bishops, and sentenced to deposition, with a recommendation to the emperor to punish him for the high treason said to be involved in his preaching *at* the emperess. Arcadius banished him. He resolved at first not to leave the flock which had been committed to him by a Greater than the emperor; and preached an exciting sermon; but then, fearing a tumult, permitted himself to be conveyed by an officer to Nicæa, in Bithynia. Groans and cries resound in the city when the people know that their Golden-mouth is really gone; the coincidence of an earthquake enhances the general confusion, and the alarmed and remorseful emperess, procuring by woman's tears the concurrence of Arcadius, hastily sends off a letter beseeching the bishop to return. He is greeted back by the illuminated shores of the Bosphorus and the general joy. But the calm is short.

A silver statue of Eudoxia, resting on a column of porphyry, was, with noisy festivities, dedicated near the church of St. Sophia, and the worshippers were disturbed. The bishop gave an angry sermon, which reached the ears of the emperess, and made *her* also angry. In no-wise daunted, John—if we may believe the report—now began a sermon with the words: *Once more Herodias rages, once more she dances, and once more demands the head of John!* This was not to be forgiven. A new synod was convoked, and

advised by Theophilus—whose fear held him at home—to stretch for the occasion certain questionable canons, condemned John for resuming his place before the sentence of the former synod had been reversed. The emperor commanded him to abandon his church. He replied, “I have received this church from God, for the salvation of the people, and I cannot abandon it; but the city is yours, and if you wish me to quit it, drive me away by force, that I may have a lawful cause.” His life was several times attempted. Another imperial order was sent, more peremptory and precise than the former. On the 20th day of June, 404, he bade a sad farewell to a few bishops and deaconesses, who had continued faithful, and for fear of disturbance he withdrew secretly from the city. The people made an insurrection, burning public buildings; there followed a fearful hail-storm and the death of Eudoxia, which they spoke of as Heaven’s vengeance. The troublesome bishop was this time transported to Cucusus, a deserted town among the mountains of Taurus. Here, faithful to his character as servant of Jesus Christ, he planned and laboured with success for the conversion of the neighbouring pagans, and consoled and exhorted by letter his absent flock. As the place was much exposed to robbers, he removed further eastward to Arabissa, in Armenia. Here he fell ill from the extreme cold in the winter of 405-6. The Roman troops having meanwhile repressed the robbers, he returned to Cucusus in the Spring. His enemies, jealous of the praise of his good deeds, and, perhaps, fearing his recall, determined to prevent it by transporting him beyond observation, to Pityus in Pontus, the last city of the empire on the eastern coast of the Euxine. Two officers were commissioned to conduct him thither, with the promise of reward should he die on the way. One was pitiful; but secretly, as the manifest aim of the other was to fulfil the wishes of their employers. The bishop was accordingly treated with brutality; his bald head exposed now to the hot sun, now to showers of rain. Every place which seemed to offer comfort on the journey was carefully avoided. Passing Comana, in Pontus, without stopping, they proceeded some miles further to a village in whose church rested the bones of a martyr. That night, it is said, the martyr appeared to the bishop, with the words, *Take courage, my brother John, we shall be together to-morrow.* The next day,

John, relying on the vision, vainly besought his guards not to depart before eleven in the morning. They set off as usual, and marched some few miles, when it became manifest that the dying bishop could go no further. They returned with him to the last night's resting-place. Arrived here, he robes himself in white, partakes of the Lord's Supper, prays with the company, repeats the words of Job, —which were often on his lips—“*Blessed be God for all things,*” makes the sign of the cross, and with an *Amen*, renders his noble spirit. This was on the 14th of September, 407, when he was about sixty years old. He was buried near the martyr, with much solemnity, by Christians from Syria, Cilicia, Pontus, and Armenia.

His exile and death could not smother the idea of him. A new glory burst forth from his tomb; loved and admired before, he was now revered and extolled as a holy martyr. A schism arose at Constantinople, where the Johnnites would acknowledge no successor in the archiepiscopal seat, and separated themselves from the church. Nor would they return, until in 438, Theodosius II., confessing the sins of his parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, brought back to Constantinople the remains of her bishop, and paid them the highest funeral honours.

He is described as short of stature, with large bald head, capacious wrinkled forehead, spare beard, hollow cheeks, retiring eyes, movements full of brisk energy, appearance of carnal discomfort. He never went to feasts, however often invited, and drank wine only in very warm weather.

The nature of this man was marked by *intensity*. Whatever he had been he would have striven to be wholly; whatever he had done he would have done with all his might. Grace led him to the christian ministry, and he threw his soul into the office. He was intense in friendship, intense in his austerities, intense in alms-giving, intense to rashness in rebuke, intense in reform. He preached intensely, like Edward Irving, but was never maddened by popularity, nor fascinated by the great. As an interpreter of Scripture, he is distinguished by common sense and vital sagacity, steering between the extremes of literality and allegorizing. It is easy to see, that underneath all his sternness there lay a rich vein of kind humour. His writings manifest a deep knowledge of mankind. As from the Puritans we may learn much of old English life, in like manner the works of this

observer of men will be found a rich repertory of the manners of the age. As a christian he was eminent for *faith*; with an eye fixed steadily on the Unseen, neither respecting worldly greatness nor despising poverty, but regarding man, simply, in his spiritual relations, needs, capabilities, prospects. Prosperity could not seduce, nor misfortune daunt him from care for souls. He held constant converse with the writings of Paul, as a kindred and model spirit. On the whole no figure of those ecclesiastical centuries more excites our love and wonder, and attracts a purer complacency, than majestic and gentle John Chrysostom, whose errors belonged to the times, whose virtues were his own.

We propose in our next number to give some account of the theological sentiments and of the writings of Chrysostom, with some specimen paragraphs from his treatises and homilies.

W.C., M.A.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[WE hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

PSYCHOLOGY AND THEOLOGY; or Psychology applied to the Investigation of Questions relating to Religion, Natural Theology, and Revelation. By RICHARD ALLIOTT, L.L.D., Professor of Theology and Mental Philosophy, Western College, Plymouth.

We fear that this work is one of those of a generation of books, which have the rare distinction of being "born out of due time"—not in the post-date, but in the pro-date sense. The religious world is not intellectually ripe for such a book as this. The first page will frighten the majority, whilst many who will attempt to read it will be in the quiet bosom of Morpheus before they reach the end of the first lecture; a few only—but thank God! a gradually increasing and mentally regal few—will peruse it with the deepest interest from the first sentence to the last. We suspect the

unripeness of the church for such a work; partly because it is still fashionable with its popular teachers, to deal in the old and vulgar declamations against "philosophy;" and partly from the fact that so few of the metropolitan preachers felt sufficient interest in the subject of this work, to attend upon the lectures when in course of delivery at the "Congregational Library." Although the lecturer is a man of high position and acknowledged superiority, and the lecture was opened to ministers of all denominations, there were not more, we suppose, than a dozen who heard out the course. We state this, not because we consider it to reflect upon the abilities of our author; on the contrary, it is notorious that the best of his predecessors were treated so; but in order to intimate that anti-metaphysical preachers may surely cease to denounce "philosophy," since there is not much reason to dread the psychological tendencies of the pulpit.

However, whether the book is before or after its time, it is a truly valuable production. "The study of consciousness," says Sir William Hamilton, "is psychology. Man is the microcosm of existence; consciousness, within a narrow focus, concentrates a knowledge of the universe and of God; psychology is thus the abstract of all science, human and divine." Dr. Alliot's view of psychology agrees throughout with this wide and grand definition of the profoundly philosophic Baronet. Regarding it as the abstract of all science, the Doctor in his introductory discourse unfolds its relation to the science of religion, of God, and revelation.

In the second lecture, two questions are discussed: first, whether religion be owing to a distinct faculty, susceptibility, or principle, of the human mind; and secondly, whether the human will has a self-determining power. In the first, the arguments of Schleiermacher and Morell are exposed and refuted. In the third lecture, the question is raised as to the origin of the idea of God. The object of the fourth lecture is to prove that a being does exist who corresponds with this idea. In the fifth and two following lectures, those controverted questions relating to religion and God, are discussed with what aid psychology affords in reference to christianity as a supernatural communication from God, and to the scriptures as an inspired record of the communications.

The vast field of subjects which is thus opened up, involves questions the most profound in speculative enquiry, and vital in the duty and destiny of man. We cannot say that we agree with all the postulates of the author, nor does he at all times succeed in conducting us to his conclusions. Had we the space of a "Quarterly" at our command we should be tempted to enter somewhat at large on the points to which we take exception. But we do not regard the book as less valuable on account of our disagreement. It is in every sense a first-

class work. Such a work as only a man accustomed to the profoundest abstract studies, thoroughly acquainted with the present state of mental science, with the keenest logical eye for the detection of metaphysical distinctions, and withal an intelligent and genuine believer in christianity could produce.

This book indicates labour of the highest kind—the tracing of the meandering streams of truth to the fountain—the bringing of its stray notes into the scale of music. It is profound in arrangement, useful in its aim, manly in its tone, christian in spirit, as free from obscurity, as redundancy in style.

We are right glad to find that the author of this book occupies the theological chair in a college for the training of young men for the christian ministry ; we congratulate the students who have a teacher so free from dogmatism ; who is both willing and able to meet those mental difficulties in the realm of theological thought which his teaching, like all true teaching, is powerful to suggest—one who has that true metaphenomenal power to lead the students through all the outer courts in the great temple of truth, into the inmost sanctuary of divine light.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT : Sermons preached before the University of Oxford. By JOHN JACKSON, D.D., Bishop of Lincoln. London: William Skeeffington.

This is a volume of sermons on some of the cardinal themes of christian theology. Although they are the productions of a prelate, they have, in common with all human compositions, their defects as well as excellencies. They present doctrines, rather in their relation to a theological system, than to a world of living souls ; their contact is rather with ideas than men ; they treat man more as a passive instrument, to be acted upon by the gospel, than a moral agent, whose obligation it is to turn all objective systems and influences to his own use ; and they lack, moreover, too much of that ruggedness of thought, that conversational suggestiveness, and thorough recognition of those questions, difficulties, and aspirations which are now agitating the living world around us, to meet with our entire approval, and to reach our ideal of sermons. Still, they are productions of no common order. We like their thorough evangelical tone, their calm thoughtfulness, their entire freedom from religious exclusiveness and learned pedantry, and the simple, but expressive language in which the ideas are clothed. There are many exquisite passages in each—passages displaying the discrimination of acute thought, and the charms of a high eloquence.

THE ANNOTATED PARAGRAPH BIBLE; containing the Old and New Testaments, according to the authorized version, arranged in paragraphs and parallelisms, with Explanatory Notes, Prefaces to the several books, and entirely new Selection of References to parallel and illustrative passages : Maps, Tables, &c.—Part IV.—The Prophetical Books.

THE COMING MAN; or, *The True Deliverer.* By the Rev. GEORGE HENRY DAVIES.

THE TRACT MAGAZINE AND CHRISTIAN MISCELLANY; containing various pieces of permanent interest.

THE CHILD'S COMPANION AND JUVENILE INSTRUCTOR. New Series,
We have classed these works together because they are all the publications of the RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

The ANNOTATED PARAGRAPH BIBLE, of which we have only seen this part IV, is fully described in its title, and is a work of unquestionable merit and utility. We shall endeavour to give our readers a fuller idea of this work when the whole comes under our notice.

“THE COMING MAN” is, we consider, one of the best little volumes in the series to which it belongs. Its arguments are well chosen and stated with great adroitness, and very concisely. The writer is too earnest in his aim, to be pleonastic or pretty.

THE TRACT MAGAZINE abounds with little Anecdotes, which will interest intellectual children of all ages.

THE CHILD'S COMPANION is a beautiful little book, well fitted for its sphere.

THE APOSTLE PAUL AND HIS TIMES. By MRS. STALLYBRASS, Principal of the Ladies College, Clapton. London: Ward and Co.

THE EVANGELICAL SYSTEM CONSIDERED IN ITS VARIOUS ASPECTS.
By the Rev. JOHN STOCK. Second Edition. Leeds: John Heaton and Son.

THE PILOT OF THE GALILEAN LAKE. By THOMAS LOW. London: Jarrold and Sons.

THE APOSTLE PAUL AND HIS TIMES is a laudable attempt of a pious and talented lady to interest her pupils in the history, and indoctrinate them in the principles, of the prince of apostles. The book contains, not only a sketch of the apostle's life, but the salient facts of his age, with many useful reflections. It is written in a clear and vigorous style, printed in good type, and, mechanically, is well “got up.”

THE EVANGELICAL SYSTEM is the second edition of a work which we have before noticed and recommended as a compendium of evangelical truth in its propositional or scientific form.

THE PILOT OF THE GALILEAN LAKE. "The object," says the author, "of these pages is to promote the truth as it is in Jesus, to exhibit, exalt and glorify Christ as the Saviour of the perishing; Christ as the way, the truth, and the life; Christ as the only pilot that can grasp the helm and safely weather the threatening storm." We do not always admire, either the logic, taste, or theology, of the author of this little work, but always his poetic fire, honest ring, and high practical energy.

THE BRITISH CONTROVERSIALIST, and Magazine of Self-culture.
London: Houlstone and Stoneman.

NO BETTER THAN WE SHOULD BE; or, Travels in Search of Consistency. By ANDREW MARVELL, Jun. Second Edition. London: Bulman.

THE BRITISH CONTROVERSIALIST is a monthly serial, designed to promote the intellectual development of young men, through the discussion of subjects relating to religion, philosophy, history, politics, and social economy. Six numbers are stitched together in the volume before us. We have gone through the various articles, and can honestly affirm it to be admirably suited for its mission. Some of the papers display the highest order of mind; most are far above mediocrity, and all are more or less provocatives of thought. To young men who aspire to intellectual progress, we heartily commend it.

NO BETTER THAN WE SHOULD BE, is intended to show the sad lack of consistency in all sections of the church. Andrew Marvel makes an allegorical tour through the British Isle in search of christian consistency,—but finds none. The conduct everywhere contradicts the creed; the life belies the belief. In an Island, however, far off in the South Sea, he discovers the precious treasure, and feels the transport of rapture. We like this little book: it has convictions and it speaks them out with manly honesty; and it has the genius to state them in an allegory, which will ensure their perusal. We should like every professor to read young Andrew's "Travels."

A HOMILY

ON

The Spiritual Universe.—

THE MINISTERING ONES.

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”—Heb. i. 14.

IN a former homily I made some general remarks upon *spirit*, and endeavoured to represent the ideas which we are in the habit of attaching to it. I pass now to the study of a certain class of those spiritual existences, denominated, in the Bible, ANGELS.* It is scarcely necessary to premise that our subject is a Biblical one; and as such it is one whose importance for man's study must be presumed, and whose study must be prosecuted in the light of the book which contains it. True, philosophy suggests some ideas of their existence, gradations, and functions; but those ideas, apart from the Bible, are too shadowy for any permanent salutary influence upon the life of man. The Bible gives them body and force.

* The word angel in Hebrew and Greek signifies messenger, and denotes whatever agent God employs, *personal or impersonal*. In some cases it designates ordinary messengers; as in Job i. 14; 1 Sam. ix. 3; Luke vii. 24., ix. 52. In some cases it designates the prophets: Isaiah xlii. 19; Hag. i. 13; Mal. ii. 7. In some cases it designates the ministers of the New Testament, Rev. i. 20. In some cases it designates inanimate objects, Exodus xiv. 19; Psalms civ. 4., lxxviii. 49; 2 Cor. xii. 7. And in some cases it designates superhuman spirits—in this sense we use the word here; and this is the sense in which the word is now popularly used.

The text states :—

I. THAT THEY ARE SPIRITS. Whilst spirits, everywhere, possess the same essential attributes, and must be regarded, therefore, as related to the same great moral system, and subject to the same great laws, we are not to suppose that they are all of one mould. Spirit differs from spirit, as plant from plant, brute from brute, and star from star. In the light of the Bible, for example, we discover features in which angels differ from man, and features in which they differ among themselves. For the sake of clearness it may be well for us, briefly at the outset, to notice the most salient points of those differences :—

First : *The features in which they differ from man.* It would seem from the Bible that they have greater VITALITY ; they are called “living ones,” implying that they have life in a high degree. The human spirit has *life*, but then it is filled with thoughts of death, and these thoughts often spread a dense gloom over its path ; they depress its energies and restrict its freedom ; they quench its lights and break its peace. But the idea of dying never enters the heart of an angel. The sweep of centuries, the wreck of planets, or the crash of doom, suggests to these *living ones* no suspicion, either of coming infirmities or ultimate extinction. The “morning stars,” that struck the first note in creation’s anthem, will be fresh in energy and buoyant in youth, when these heavens shall be folded up as a vesture, and worn out with age. POWER is another feature, in which they are distinguished from us. Elsewhere we have said, that spirit is force ; the greatest force in this world is mind. But who can look at the human mind, in comparison with that *ideal* of intellectual and moral force common to us all, without feeling that even in its highest forms of power it is still weak :—weak in faculty, weak in purpose, weak in effort, weak in every sense for good ? But, angels are said to “excel in strength,” and they are called “mighty

angels." Wonderful are the deeds recorded of them in this book. One of their number smote in the days of David seventy thousand men. In one night another slew the mighty army of Sennacherib.

"The angel of death spread his wings in the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he past."

They are represented as moving the great wheels of the providential government of the universe—as holding the winds of heaven ; bursting the seals, kindling the lightnings, and rolling the thunders, of eternal justice. If it be said, are not these exhibitions only of physical force—force which acts on matter? Our reply is, still it is the force, not of muscle, but of spirit; and the spirit entrusted with such divine commissions must be endowed with a proportionate amount of intellectual and moral energy. And besides, is not the fact, that one of their number, though fallen, is represented as leading our world of human minds in every age captive at his will, a telling proof of their gigantic *mental* force? PERFECT KNOWLEDGE is another feature which distinguishes them from men. They are represented as being "full of eyes." How little does the most intelligent man know; and the more intelligent he is, the more like Newton, he feels his ignorance—he feels that his knowledge is but as a drop to the Atlantic; his capacity for knowing, but as a shell to the shore over which mighty oceans roll. But the little he knows is imperfect. His intellectual progress is, in a great measure, a rectification of errors. He sees through a glass darkly; there is a haze over all the objects within his little horizon. The knowledge of angels is *perfect*—perfect, however, not in the sense of *degree*. We may suppose their knowledge to be immense, when compared with man's. The superiority of their knowing faculties, their facilities for learning, their power of passing with the *celerity* of lightning—for "the speed of angels time counts not"—from world to world, the long ages in which they

have uninterruptedly been earnest students in the illimitable field of truth, would lead us to infer that the amount of their knowledge transcends the powers of man, at present, to appreciate. But great, though it may be, they know but little compared with what is to be known; they only know "parts of His ways"; there are immeasurable districts which they have never reached, worlds and systems, perhaps, of which they have never heard. There can be no perfection in the *degree* of creature knowledge; the unknown must ever be infinitely greater than the known. But in *kind*, it is perfect. What they see, they see fully in the *right* light. Their intuitions are clear, and there is naught but sunshine on all that comes within their view.

Having noticed a few of the features which distinguish them from man, let us mark :—

Secondly : *Some of the features which distinguish them from each other.* They are not all of the same mould, position, or function. Analogy would suggest the idea of gradation amongst them. The physiologist can trace a gradational chain in all animal existence in this world. He can trace it, almost link by link, from that sentient creature which seem next to the plant up to man, who is at the head of all. Is it not, therefore, natural to suppose that on the assumption that other spirits than man exist, they exist in this order of gradation? The Bible, however, reveals the fact. It tells us of *thrones, principalities, powers, and dominions*. There may be as great a difference between some classes of angelic intelligence, as there is between insects and men. They differ in the amount of faculty, in the form of talent, in the date of their existence, in the sphere of their agency. Some, perhaps, are younger by milleniums than others, and some occupy one world and some another;—worlds separated from each other by leagues, which no finite existence can traverse and which no arithmetic can compute.

What a view of the universe is thus suggested to us!

The wonders which the telescope opens up to our vision bear no comparison to the wonders which the Bible discloses ; astronomy, as generally understood, unfolds to us world upon world and system upon system, until imagination reels in the prospect, and the spirit seems crushed with a sense of its own insignificance. But the Bible teaches us to people the wide fields of air, the rolling planets, and immensity with countless spirits ; reaching in regular gradation from my little being up to the ineffable throne—spirits, who have eyes to mark my movements, ears to catch my words, hearts to sympathize with my lowly history, and power to lift me up, or to press me down. “We are compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses.”

II. THEY ARE MINISTERING SPIRITS. There are two thoughts implied in the word “ministering ;”—activity, and activity for others.

First : *Activity*. These beings are ever *active*. It is said of them, that “they rest not day nor night.” Their happiness is in activity, not ease ; work is the law and delight of their being. Three things are necessary to keep an intelligent being in constant employment—an ever-inviting sphere—an untiring capacity—an undying sympathy with the work. Angels have all these conditions. Is not their field of action ever inviting ? In the sphere of contemplation, what new realms of truth may present themselves in every advancing step ! And in the department of divine service, what new acts of gratitude, devotion, and benevolence, are evermore required ! Will their capacity ever tire ? Mind seems to me an existent, which in its nature fainteth not, neither is weary ; it grows young with years and strong by exercise. And as to their sympathy with the work—will not this remain so long as their holiness remains ? And the longer a being’s holiness continues, the stronger the probability of its continuance.

Secondly : *Activity for others is implied in the word*

"*ministering.*" The spirits of men are generally active,—but they are more active for *themselves* than for others; as a rule, "they seek their own." This is evidently contrary to the original constitution of the moral creation. *Material* nature suggests this. Around us there is not an element or existence that does not seem to act for others, rather than itself. Does the sun shine for itself? Does the air float for its own good? Do the clouds bear their seas of refreshing waters through the heavens for their own benefit? Do the flowers unfold their lovely tints and exhale their fragrant odours, or the birds robe themselves in beauteous plumage, and pour forth their music upon the "desert air," to please themselves? Material nature throughout is generous. All its forms and functions are protests against selfishness—are symbols of benevolence. Is not the material a portraiture of the spiritual? And does it not everywhere adumbrate the truth, that God makes nothing for itself, that one thing is ordained to minister to another—the universe through? We think so. Our *consciousness*, also, suggests the same truth. The more disinterested and self-oblivious we are, the nearer we feel ourselves approximating to the original ideal of character, and the more we feel the true joys of being. We conclude, therefore, that no spirit was ever made to work for itself as an *end*, but to labour always for the common good. Spirit is made to minister to spirit, and God ministers to all. The lofty beings of whom we are speaking fulfil the end for which all creatures are made—to minister to others; they receive not to monopolize, but to distribute. The good of the universe is their master aim, benevolence their highest impulse, God's will their law, and His smile their heaven.

We learn from the text :—

III. THAT THEY ARE MINISTERING SPIRITS DIVINELY COMMISSIONED. They are "sent forth to minister." The Bible gives us an account of various "spirits" that are "minister-

ing" in this world to man. There are "the spirits of devils working miracles," and seeking by "lying wonders" to impose upon the credulity of the ignorant and superstitious; there are the seducing "spirits," who are ever active in seeking to turn humanity from the simple truth of moral and evangelical things; there are the "spirits of wickedness," in fierce and deadly conflict with the church; and there are the "unclean spirits," prowling about the places of society seeking rest and finding none. These spirits, whose operations we shall have to notice hereafter, are busy in our world. They infest our earthly sphere, they haunt our walks, they work even through our best institutions, they breathe in the pages of our literature; unclean spirits fly on the wings of our popular press, enter the sanctuary of homes, and taint the current of youthful hearts; in the name of truth they diffuse error, in the holy name of love they kindle lust, in the reverent name of God they do the work of the devil.

But these "ministering spirits" neither minister for the good of others, nor are they *sent* of God. But good angels are divinely commissioned. God appoints them their spheres, He gives them their inspiration and endows them with power. Deep and invariable is the interest they feel in His will. Hence we find them in connexion with all the great epochs of His *law*. At its first violation on earth we find angels at the gate of Eden, in the name of justice brandishing their flaming sword. When republished on Sinai, the chariots of God, even thousands of angels were there, amidst the flashing fires and appalling peals. When it was about receiving the highest homage in the career of Jesus, they were busy. They sang at His birth, they strengthened Him on the night of agony, they rolled the stone from the grave where the "mighty victim slept," and whence the glorious victor rose. From the Mount of Olives they hailed Him to the skies, carolling, perhaps, as they soared the upward heights, "Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting-

ing doors that the king of glory may come in." And when He shall appear at last, finally to vindicate law, angels shall attend Him as the awful judge. They are ministers of God, sent forth to do His work.

How great is God! How great must he be who directs the movements of these countless hosts, at whose throne the loftiest of their number bow in humblest homage, and whose behests each counts it his highest honor and blessedness to obey. How great must He be whose nature is the profoundest study of these high intelligences, whose character concentrates their devoutest affections, and whose will is their absolute law! When I think of Him, as bringing out the stars and calling them all by names, He seems great—overwhelmingly great—but not so great as when I think of Him engrossing the affections, controlling the energies, and guiding the operations, of those untold myriads of pure, free and independent MINDS that people His habitable universe.

We learn from the text :—

IV. THAT THEY ARE MINISTERING SPIRITS, DIVINELY COMMISSIONED TO HELP A CLASS OF MANKIND. Those who "shall be heirs of salvation." The apostle does not say that they are sent forth to minister to all mankind, nor to those who *now* inherit salvation, but to those who "*shall*."* Who can say, who *shall* be heirs in this age, and who in the coming ages? We know, indeed, that they will be "multitudes which no man can number," that they will out-count the stars, and, in all probability, leave the reprobate of the race in a minority ;—which will serve to show only the weakness of Satan as compared with the power of Christ, and the impotency of sin as compared with the *aboundings* of grace. To

* Are not all of them (of whatever rank) no more than ministering spirits, sent forth for service (or assistance) on account of (*i. e.* for the sake of) those who are to inherit (*i. e.* obtain) salvation?—*Bloomfield.*

all these, in every age, angels are ministering spirits. Numerous are the instances recorded in the Bible in which we see them render assistance to man. They rescued Lot from Sodom, and guarded Daniel in the lion's den; they directed Joseph and Mary into Egypt, and liberated the apostles from prison. They directed Cornelius to Peter, and wafted the spirit of Lazarus to the skies. They rejoice over the conversion of sinners; they have a "charge" over the righteous, they "encamp round about them," they bear them "up in their hands."

As this, their ministering to man, is an aspect of our subject which deeply concerns us, we shall occupy the remainder of this homily with a few of the general truths which it evidently implies.

First: *Their ministry to man implies that there is some method by which they can help us.* There must be some medium of communication—some way by which they can reach us for our good. What is it? They do not now appear as they once did—in visible form; we see not their beauteous figure, hear not the sweet cadence of their voice, nor feel the glowing pressure of their hand, which our forefathers did. The age of miracles has long since departed; since the fathers fell asleep all things continue to move in a course of unbroken order. Still, from the Bible we infer, that angels help us now. How? How does man best help man? Is it not by *suggesting the true and useful in thought*? There is nothing in the universe that has such a power over us for weal or woe as THOUGHT. The whole system of impulse, restless, ever throbbing and heaving within us, like tides in oceans, is under the dominion of thought; indeed, the whole machinery of mind is at its disposal; it touches every spring and directs every wheel. It forms our character, it determines our moods. A thought lifts us in a moment from gloom to sunshine; or, the reverse, breaks the calm atmosphere into thunder and mantles the sky in clouds. God's "comforts," which delight the soul, and sin's terrors,

which strike agony into every nerve of conscience, are alike in *thought*. A thought has often lashed the spirit into a tempest, and made the bravest heart quail with fear: yes, and often, too, hushed the troubled spirit into a heavenly calm, kindled hopes which cheered it in the gloom, and opened fountains which refreshed it in the desert.

But how can angels *suggest* thoughts to man? I cannot answer this question; but I know from the testimony of others, and from my personal consciousness, that *thoughts* enter the human soul, whose existence cannot be accounted for on any of the *known* laws of mental suggestion. Who has not been conscious of thoughts that have darted into him rather than sprung from him—that have appeared to him more as strange visitants, than his own offspring? Whence come they? Until psychology give me a satisfactory answer, I shall believe that they come from those spiritual existences who encamp about us. Science tells me that the most distant star influences this planet; and may not the most distant spirit influence me? Shall matter commune and mingle, and spirits be kept apart! On the “ladder” of suggestion we can see how they can “ascend” and “descend” through all the regions of soul.

Secondly: *That the ministry of angels to man implies that man's salvation is of paramount importance.* It is a law that truly great beings will never be deeply interested in trivial subjects. You may gauge the dimensions of a mind by estimating the importance of the objects which awakens its sympathies. The Bible teaches that angels are deeply interested in man's conversion,—that they rejoice over the repentant sinner. This, indeed, is wonderful to us, since we feel such a little interest in the *spiritual* history of our species. The schemes and fluctuations of commerce, the birth and death of emperors, the revolutions of governments, the rise and fall of empires, the defeats and triumphs of armies,—these are things which interest men. They are sufficient to agitate the heart of nations and shake

the world with excitement. But the conversion of a soul to God, a revolution in the thoughts, designs, and destiny, of a deathless spirit, the generality of men will either laugh at or deem beneath their note. But the events that *our* "great men" consider great, stir not a thought in heaven;—are, perhaps, in the estimation of angels, but mere bubbles of a moment, rising and bursting on the majestic stream of time. What to us is little, to them is great. They see in the birth of a great thought, in the rising of a high feeling, in the generation of a holy purpose, though in the breast of a plebeian boy, a sublimer event than the inauguration of sovereigns, or the organizations of mighty empires. For that thought shall live and spread with light—that feeling will swell and flow with goodness—that purpose shall start an endless series of deeds that shall be working good in the universe, when every human empire shall be broken up, and every human crown, throne, and sceptre, shall be dust. Ought not the fact, that these superior intelligences feel this deep interest in man's salvation, to impress us with its paramount importance? O let me learn to feel that there are stupendous interests associated with my existence here—interests not connected with houses, and land, and funds, and governments, but with moral ideas, sympathies and deeds—interests greater than the world, sublimer than time, vast as infinitude, and lasting as eternity.

Thirdly: *The ministry of angels to man implies, that service to the lowest is consonant with the highest greatness.* There is reason to believe that the human mind belongs to the lowest grade in the spiritual universe. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive of rational existence in a lower form than we find it in connexion with man. During the first stage of its history it is inferior in many points to the brute; and amongst the majority of uneducated adults in every age it is found but a short remove from the instinct of the more sagacious creatures around. But humble as the human mind is, compared with the other grades in the

great spiritual hierarchy, and even corrupt and debased through sin, as we find it here, it is not too insignificant for angels to minister to. These illustrious intelligences act upon the principle laid down by Christ:—*That the greatest should be minister to the least.* There is no principle more divine, important, and binding, on moral mind than this. By it does the intelligent universe advance. By the intelligent helping the less informed, the stronger helping the weaker, the higher raising the lower, and the GREATEST uplifting all, every grade of spirit throughout creation rises upward to the loftiest heights of being.

But in human society there is an entire inversion of this principle. The weakest and the poorest are compelled to minister to the men of power and wealth. Hence men associate the idea of greatness with the rendering of service to those who move in a higher circle. The millions of every age would esteem it the highest honour to minister the slightest service to those in the highest walks of life. But who thinks of attaching honour to any service rendered to the poor and the distressed? Who thinks of dignity in visiting the haunts of poverty, and dealing crumbs to starving Lazarus? Why, it is scarcely thought respectable to speak to a poor man, still less to take him by the hand, enter his humble dwelling, sit by his desolate hearth, and converse with him on the common ground of manhood. Ye aspirants for worldly greatness, learn a lesson from the conduct of celestial intelligences as to what true greatness is! What are you in the scale of existence to angels? Whatever the nobleness of your ancestry, the brilliancy of your titles, the exaltedness of your position, the splendour of your genius, or the vastness and variety of your attainments,—still what are you to those high ones in the creation who sang at the birth of time, and live, and work, through all revolving eras under the radiant smiles of God? Yet they visit the poorest of your race, enter the dungeons of prisoners, and hover over the death-bed of the indigent and distressed. They

rejoice when the poorest is converted, and when he dies waft his disembodied spirit to the regions of the blessed. *The greatest creature in the creation is the greatest servant.*

Fourthly: *That the ministry of angels to man argues the obligation of man to seek the spiritual good of his fellows.* If angels are interested in our salvation, ought we not to be interested in the salvation of one another? Shall they be ever alive to the higher claims of our children, our neighbours, our countrymen, our world, and we the offspring of the same father, partakers of the same infirmities, treading the same soft earth, breathing the same air, and destined for the same eternity, remain indifferent? Heaven forbid! In the name of all that is consistent in truth, binding in justice, touching in love, let us awake to an earnest concern for the salvation of our fellow men. God help me to spread that gospel whose wonders angels study, whose purposes angels labour to promote, whose author angels adore, and on whose propagation the virtue, dignity, and blessedness, of humanity depend

“O catch its high import ye winds as ye blow ;
O bear it ye waves as ye roll
From regions that feel the sun’s vertical glow
To the utmost extremes of the pole.
Equal laws, equal rights, to the nations around,
Peace and friendship its precepts impart,
And wherever the footsteps of man can be found,
May he bind the decree to his heart.”

The Pulpit in the Family.

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON FAMILY REUNIONS.*

“And Jethro, Moses’ Father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God; and he said unto Moses,” &c.—Exodus xviii. 5-12.

THE human race inherits common susceptibilities and faculties, irregularly portioned out and cultivated, yet not so as to sever the connexion or destroy the influence of man with man. Hence history, in its substance, is little more than the changeful record of the stronger or weaker development of reproduced ideas. “That which hath been is now.” Thoughts are stirred within us by writings whose authors’ hands mouldered into dust centuries ago, or from incidents which were old before the warring tribes of Britain were formed into a nationality, as well as by the pages of modern literature, or from scenes in which we are actors or spectators. If full accounts were extant of the men of every age and clime, we should, doubtless, perceive examples calculated to move our souls and mould our conduct. I say this, not because I think we need more than we have, but because it is expressive of the power which the possession of a common nature gives to man over man. I doubt not that this is one among other reasons for the peculiar form in which God has revealed his will to mankind—so much by personal, family, and national, events. And I read the details given in these verses with the conviction that we may become wiser in the fulfilment of our duties to men and God by the lessons they contain.

The state of the people, in whose midst this occurrence

* A Sermon, Preached Christmas, 1854.

was developed, was very unsettled, and altogether unlike that to which modern society is accustomed; but we see the affections and claims peculiar to the domestic relationship maintain a vigorous sway, and draw a wife and children into the fond embrace of the husband and father. These constitute the life-pulses of the narrative, by which it throws out and off the seeds which may germinate in our spheres and influence our procedure. Especially may we find them applicable at this season, when members of so many families, leaving business or returning from temporary absence, are again united. I notice in the account of the reunion of the family of Moses, three directions bearing on our family reunions.

I. AS TO THE SALUTATIONS AT MEETING. I am not prepared to advocate the adoption of forms of saluting friends, which are usual in one country, by the people of another country. We need not copy the external acts of Moses; but they are the expression of genial feelings which we can, and which it would be well for us to entertain. We must, therefore, look at the general aspect, rather than at the particular features of his salutations; and we distinguish in it three prominent parts:—

First: *There is courtesousness.* “Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did obeisance, and kissed him.” Blood-relationship does not obliterate the signs by which man testifies respect for his common nature. Rather should it bring them out in a clearer light. Never should any feel that we are acting to them as if they were of a lower race; and least of all should a friend feel so. This general principle will exclude *excessive familiarity*. Our friends are not like play-things, which may be unceremoniously handled; they are as costly vessels which we may perfect or mar for ever. It will exclude *rudeness*. Roughness, or seeming indifference, a gibe, or a reproach, can proceed only from him who has not learned to respect himself; for he has yet truly to acquire the serious lesson that man is born for a high

destiny, corresponding to which he should be treated. It will exclude *pride*. To assume airs of superiority is the mark of a mind low in its tastes and views. "What hast thou which thou has not received, and if?" &c. Are friends to be looked down upon for want of what they may never have had opportunity to acquire? Will you blame the arrangements of the Father of spirits? Will you dare, even in heart, to spurn at those who, though bearing the tokens of earthly destitution, are stamped with the seal of immortality, and may one day be adorned with the unfading crown of righteousness? Against all such modes of receiving our brethren we must carefully guard, and in a loving way carry out the scriptural precept, "Be courteous."

Secondly: *There are kindly inquiries*. "They asked each other of their welfare." Depending in great measure upon a healthful state of body and mind, as also on suitable circumstances, for a becoming fulfilment of duties, is it not proper that such matters should receive immediate unfolding at the reunion of friends? It is not enough to see the glow and the elastic movement of health; or the pale hue of sickness and furrowed lines of care; there should be the interested questioning which would disclose the sorrows over which a friend may weep, or nestling joys in which he may rejoice.

Thirdly: *There is a hearty welcome*. "They came into the tent." Moses did not act as if he wished to impress his friends with his dignity and authority. He dispatched no messenger to say that he would be ready to receive them at a certain hour in his audience-tent, surrounded by all the pomp he could command. Like a warm-hearted man, caring more for family affections than for external appearances, he had gone forth to meet his returning relations, and welcomed them into his own abode, placing at their disposal all the domestic comforts he had. The name he bore in reference to them, was not a name only; it was the sign of a heart deeply moved by those sympathies which relationship should ever evoke. The action lets us see some of the

finer traits of manhood in the illustrious leader. Such traits we, too, can exhibit. We may welcome all reuniting friends to our homes, so as to prove our cordiality towards them; may let them see that they are free to use what we have to make them comfortable, and may thus water the seeds of attachment in the soil of unfeigned friendship.

II. AS TO THE SUBJECTS OF CONVERSATION. The grand and responsible faculty of speech demands care and interest in using it, and should least of all be allowed to take any capricious or unchecked course where it may be affecting several deathless spirits. Our conversation at family meetings will be appropriate and right, only as we have previously decided on the chief lines of thought along which our words should travel; and I fear not to say that from the conversation in the tent of Moses we have a distinct intimation of what these lines should be. Subjects of conversation should be :—

First: *On public affairs.* “And Moses told his Father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel’s sake.” The annals of the nations with which we are best acquainted will supply ample materials for suggestive converse. We may have to discourse as to how war has roused its fierce spirit—battles have been wildly fought and victories dearly won—the tempest been loosened from its restraints and swept over land and sea, overwhelming man and his wealth in a common ruin—the fog settled on the ocean, and under its dark pall the crash of bounding vessels, the shrieks of horror-stricken men and women; and

“The bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony,”

had been heard to sound—or how pestilence breathed its noxious effluvia—and the aristocrat and the pauper, the strong and the languid, had sunk down and died.

Secondly: *On social matters.* "And all the travail that had come upon them by the way." The events which have happened in the community of which we are members, will always afford subjects for instructive words. There may be *political* matters, deeply affecting us all, in some stage of progress; there may be *scientific* matters tending to alter national customs; there may be *commercial* matters widely influencing our temporal circumstances; there may be *religious* matters, calling for clear and manly utterances.

Thirdly: *With recognition of God.* "And how the Lord delivered them." The Most High rules the earth. Through Him the oppressed have been delivered and the oppressors punished. From Him the suggestions which have contributed to advance knowledge have come. By His spirit is the true religion existing and operative amongst men. In such events no actor, so to speak, is so prominent as the Lord God; but yet it often happens that we talk of the inanimate element or of the human agents efficient in them, and maintain a guilty reserve as to the Sovereign who "doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." True; to recognise His presence might be sneered at as cant, or rejected as degrading; but if it be real, why should we be silenced by the assumptions of ignorance or pride? I would not advise you to force in the name of God at every event mentioned. But I would plead for the using of some words to intimate that the eye of faith could see, beyond the nearer movements of present instrumentalities, the traces of the Almighty. This view would give the proper tone to every occurrence, would temper selfish or national complacency, and would elevate us out of the "unknown land" of accidents into the regions of constant law. It would banish from our conversation all that would injure our neighbours or give an impulse to foolishness, and be a help to fulfil the injunction, "let your speech be always with grace."

Fourthly: *Fit for mutual response.* "And Jethro said, blessed be the Lord," &c. (verses 10 and 11.) Much as

Moses had to tell, and superior as he was both in mental and civil power to Jethro, he does not engross the conversation. He is too kindly to commit such rudeness. Jethro finds opportunity to speak in harmony with the topics of conversation. Give friends freedom to express themselves, so long as they do so in conformity with the principles which I have already illustrated as guides to friendly intercourse by speech. For I do not recommend that allowance be given to speak on any subject. Such so-called free speech might be the ravings of the most abject slaves of passion. But whatever words will extend the limits of that horizon which mind surveys—whatever will afford us a deeper insight into the thoughts of God—whatever will bring our spirits nearer to that realm to which they belong, so that we may “endure as seeing him who is invisible,” let those be freely uttered and responded to, whether by difference or agreement. Following paths thus tracked for us, the time spent in family reunions would be a season ennobling to each other, and stimulating for the work of future days.

III. AS TO THE MODE OF FESTIVITY. After the prominent subjects of conversation had been discussed, a meal is partaken of by the family of Moses and by friends from among the Israelites. It is a festive occasion, such as is sanctioned by our customs too. We learn—

First: *That such festivity may not be confined to the family.* “Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses’ father-in-law.” We do not need to exclude special acquaintances because we have the enjoyment of a family reunion; we may dispense our favours, and offer to those not related to us something of the good with which God has entrusted us.

Secondly: *That it may be preceded by an act of worship.* “Jethro took a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God.” We are accustomed to preface our meals by words of thanksgiving to the Lord, not always uttered in a way befitting our need, or the majesty of him who gives food to all flesh.

But whether we might not, previous to that, join together in a more enlarged act of worship is worth thinking about. Thankfulness might well prompt a reunited family to express its dependence on, and dedication to, God in an open manner, and at a time different from the time usual for family worship. At any rate, the head of it should banish, from the few words spoken to God prior to eating, every aspect of formalism, and so prove the high value at which he estimates this appropriate acknowledgement of mercies bestowed on all present.

Thirdly: *That it should be with consciousness of the divine presence.* "Before God." To "set the Lord always before us," is a high acquirement, and we ought devoutly and earnestly to aim at it on festive occasions, when the sights and sounds of earthly joy are so forcibly attracting us. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." To eat as before God, *will make us happy and helpful.* Some may think that to try to realize the divine presence, when partaking in festivities, would be to draw a dark threatening cloud over a bright smiling scene, and would check, if not prevent, those attentions and mutual yieldings which make a family party full of pleasantness, and calculated to cement friendship. But if I go into a family meeting as a servant of God, assured that I am there because *He* has arranged for it and is with me,—who ought to be more contented and cheerful than I? And who should be more likely to attend to the wants, and promote the comfort of all who join with him in a meal, than the man who recognizes and rejoices in his unseen Father's presence?—a Father who bestows the small and the great favours which bless each one—who grants the momentary happiness as also the life-long joy. *It will make us temperate.* If we feel that we eat before God, we shall treat our bodies as for the Lord. We shall not surfeit them, but take enough to repair the tabernacle and fit it for the uses of its greater inhabitant. *It will make us have regard to the progress of the soul.* Being conscious of God's presence,

we shall strive to cultivate our affections, to acquire knowledge of men and things, to put forth the powers for good with which He has endowed us ; knowing that we have been guided to eat together for some higher, holier end, than the merely animal.

God's words assure us that our relationships are not of earthly bearing only. A solemn destiny belongs to each member of our parties; and we are now helping one another to launch upon the shoreless sea, either to sail amid gentle rippings and under smiling skies, or to be tossed and shattered in blackness and darkness for ever. Is it not wise to ponder our influence on the social circle, and from first to last act as builders for eternity? Must we not make it appear that we are followers of Christ—of Him whose “meat was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work”—who shared in the pleasures of festive occasions and diffused His elevating and purifying thoughts there? Soon all of us, now meeting, will be separated. All of us shall pass through the gates of death. But death will give the occasion of another meeting. We shall be joined again as members of the human race in the assembly gathered before the great white throne of the judge of all. How will it fare with you there? Shall you be counted worthy to sit down at the marriage supper of the lamb? It *may* be well with you, for God has provided a feast now to which he invites “whosoever will come.” “Behold the Lamb of God.” “Follow him,” and “where he is, there shall his servant also be.”

D. G. WATT, M. A.

Cheshire.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SEVENTEENTH SECTION.—*Matt.* vii. 21—27.

Man's Religions, and their Testing Day.

THIS paragraph is the solemn conclusion of that incomparable sermon which Christ delivered upon the Mount, and which has engaged our attention in the preceding sections of our exposition. Happily, it is not necessary to go into any verbal criticism in order to reach the truths which the passage contains; they stand out in bold relief and in impressive aspects. They are—

I. THAT MEN ARE NOW RELYING ON VERY DIFFERENT KINDS OF RELIGION. Most men have some religion. Man has been called a “religious animal.” He has at once worshipping instincts and capacities. However destitute of knowledge and civilization he may be, he is generally found in possession of a creed, a shrine, and a God.

Now, this passage before us suggests no less than four kinds of religion:—

First: *The religion of profession.* “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

heaven." These words imply that many of the human family would call him "Lord, Lord." And in the course of ages has it not thus happened in the case of millions? Whilst we would not be uncharitable, we are bound to be faithful; and faithfulness impels us to express the conviction that the religion of this country is for the most part of this description. It is merely, "Lord, Lord." It is a thing of words, and forms, and professions. As a nation, we call Jesus "Lord." We build temples for His worship; we swear by His religion; we are called by His name. But as a nation does our conduct agree with our profession! Are His laws held everywhere supreme? No! No! His laws are little more than speculative ideas to us as yet. His words, perhaps, are a vague creed to us, but, certainly, no ruling code. For example, He has commanded us not to labour supremely for the meat that perisheth—not to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth—not to take any anxious thought for the things of the morrow—not to return evil for evil, but to do good to our enemies, and thus imitate Him "who when He was reviled, reviled not again." These are his laws, written as with a sunbeam, in his own word; and is not our conduct in direct opposition to these injunctions? We call Him "Lord, Lord," and that is about the sum of our religion as a nation.

Another form of religion suggested by this passage is—

Secondly: *The religion of merit.* "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" The spirit of this is, Have we not merited thy favour by what we have done? There is a fearful tendency in man to attach the idea of merit to his religious conduct. How many there are who imagine that by their social integrity, their benevolent deeds, their devotional observances, they will procure the favour of their maker! But he who has this idea has not learnt the alphabet of Christianity. Were I as holy as an angel, as

devoted as a seraph, could I ever do aught that would merit a single favour from my Maker? No! for the power with which I should work would be His, and the instrumentality by which I acted would be His, and the time I employed would be His, and the influence which incited me would be His; what merit then could attach to my operations? How absurd, therefore, for a sinner to attach the idea of merit to the best of his labours!

Another form of religion suggested by this passage is—

Thirdly : *The religion of hearing.* “Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine,” &c. This, also, has ever been a very popular form of religion. Great numbers were now hanging on the lips of Christ, and feeling, probably, an interest in the wonderful things He uttered. Never, perhaps, was the religion of hearing so general as now. Many temples of the Lord are crowded every sabbath-day with the hearers of the word. But hearing the gospel is not true religion. There are many things which give men an interest in hearing the gospel, altogether apart from the true religious feeling. There is (1.) *man's native desire for excitement.* Every man has an instinctive desire for excitement; the mind pants for it as the “hart for the water-brook.” The poetry, the narrative, the discussion, the speech, the scene that will kindle the most emotion, will ever be the most welcome to the human heart. And, within the widest sweep of creature thought, are there any subjects so suited to stir the human passions, and move the human heart to its centre, as those with which the preacher has to do? There is (2.) *a native desire for knowledge.* Deeply seated in the intellect is the craving after truth,—a craving which no amount of information can gratify. Supplies only serve to quicken it; allay it they cannot. The gospel ministry meets this desire also. The Bible contains an exhaustless mine of truth, and it is the province and duty of the minister ever to bring out things new as well as old.

The fact, that the gospel ministry serves to gratify these

two instincts in human nature is sufficient to show, that no man has a right to infer that he is religious, because he feels an interest in *hearing* the word.

It serves to explain, moreover, the fact, that there are two widely distinct classes of gospel hearers;—the morbid sentimentalists and the theoretical intellectualists. The former are never gratified in the sanctuary, unless their passions are stirred and their animal sympathies awakened. Dramatic exhibitions of truth, terrible details of misery, pictorial sketches of hell, tragic exhibitions of Christ's physical agonies—whatever in fact, in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the hell under all, will move the mere feelings, are gospel to them and nothing else. Hence the preacher, however gross and material in his notions, if fluent in speech, vehement in spirit, and dramatic in style, is ever most popular with such. And the latter, namely, the theoretical intellectualists esteem nothing as gospel but certain doctrinal views. They feed on a metaphysical creed,—dust.

Another form of religion suggested by this passage is—

Fourthly : *The religion of doing.* “He that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.” “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them.” This is the only valid form of religion—the only form that will obtain the approbation of Christ and stand the test of the retributive economy. Christianity is a system intended, not merely to awaken excitement or instruct the intellect, but to rule the life and form the character. “For not the hearers of the law are just before God; but the doers of the law shall be justified.”

The next general truth which this passage contains is—

II. THAT A CRISIS WILL DAWN WHEN ALL THE VARIOUS KINDS OF RELIGION SHALL BE TESTED. “*That day.*” The universal forebodings of humanity, men's moral reasonings on providence and analogy, concur with the Bible in teaching

that such a day will come. Christ says, "that day," as if his hearers were thoroughly convinced of its coming, and were assured of its pre-eminent importance. "*That day*,"—when all the purposes of mercy shall be realized, when the mediatorial economy shall be closed and Christ deliver up the kingdom to God, even the father.—"*That day*,"—when earth's "marble tomb" shall burst assunder, and the graves send forth their mighty dead; when all the men who have ever breathed this air, or trod this earth, shall stand forth in the full consciousness of their personal identity in the presence of their maker, and their judge.—"*That day*,"—when the despised Galilean, the wearied traveller at Jacob's Well, the malefactor on the cross, shall appear on that "great white throne" before whose refulgent brightness the heavens and the earth shall melt away.—"*That day*,"—when every providential mystery shall be explained, every complaint silenced, every murmur hushed for ever.—"*That day*,"—to which all other days have pointed, to which the events of all other days have flown, whose sun shall never set, and whose transactions will never be reversed or forgotten.—"*That day*,"—when an everlasting separation shall be made between the righteous and the wicked; when the redeemed universe, shaken by the storms of centuries, shall settle into a peace that no sin shall break again.—"*That day*,"—when all the bright epochs of time, which, like stars, have been glimmering out their pale and chilly rays from the benighted firmament of the race, shall be lost in the brightness of a sun that shall rise to set no more.

The other general truth contained in this passage is—

III. THAT ON THIS DAY THE TRUE AND FALSE RELIGIONISTS WILL BE MOST SIGNALLY DISTINGUISHED.

First: *The false religionists will be filled with intense anxiety,—the true will not.* "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord," &c. How agitated the false in that day, how calm the true!

Secondly : *The false religionists will be rejected, the true will not.* “And then will I profess unto you I never knew you,” &c. How ineffably dreadful will it be to be disowned by him whose smile is heaven, but whose frown is hell. “I never knew you”;—never approved of you;—though you heard with interest my gospel, though you wrought great things in my name, yet I never approved of you.

Thirdly : *The false religionists will meet with destruction, the true will not.* “Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock : And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not : for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell : and great was the fall of it.” In Judea there are periodical rains which often continue for successive days ; these rains often fill the glens of the mountains to their overflow, and the accumulated waters rush forth and roll in foaming torrents down the hills, bearing everything before them. The house that was built above them would be secure, but that at the base would be exposed to the utmost danger. Picture the scene of the house thus built on the sand. It is just finished and the owner has taken possession of it as his home. There he hoped to enjoy comforts which would amply repay his labour and cost. In a season all is fair. It is girded by the hills, the valleys bloom around, the genial air breathes softly by. It seems a beautiful residence, a well-chosen home. The traveller admires it on his way. But the summer months roll away, autumn succeeds, and now the dreary winter comes. There are indications of a storm, the clouds gather, blacken, and spread ; the winds howl in threatening notes, rains commence, torrents fall on the earth day after day without abatement, the

glens of the mountains are full to an overflow, they come rushing down the hills with an ever-increasing force, they dash against the sides of the house, they accumulate around it, they penetrate and loosen the foundation; meanwhile the winds are raised to a hurricane and are beating all their force upon the building. At length the foundation gives way; not a stone, a timber, escapes—it is utter ruin. “Great was the fall.” Such is the image which Christ employs to describe the terrible condition of the false religionists in “*That day*.”

How miserable the circumstances of this man! Think of the *amount* of his loss. All the money, anxiety, and labor, which its erection cost him, sacrificed for ever. Think of the *time* of his loss; the house is destroyed just at the period when *most required*,—in the tempest; Think of the *irremediableness* of his loss. The materials are probably borne away by the flood, and a re-erection is impossible.

In sublime contrast with this, behold the stately and stable dwelling of the “doer of the word,” up upon the rock yonder. It stands unmoved amidst the severest tempests of *that day*, and with a full consciousness of security, the tenant looks calmly out, and enjoys the wild sublimity of the scene.

Gems of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*The Battle of Amalek, an Instructive War.*

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek : to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek,” &c.—Exodus xvii. 8-16.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-fourth.

THERE are three aspects in which you may profitably look at this brief fragment of ancient history:—as the record of a war, distinguished from most modern wars ; as the record of a war, suggesting principles of universal application ; and as the record of a war, symbolizing the spiritual conflict in which good men are ever engaged.

I. AS THE RECORD OF A WAR DISTINGUISHED FROM MOST MODERN WARS. There are three features which distinguish this war from most modern encounters.

First : *It was purely defensive on the Hebrew side.* “Then came Amalek and fought,” &c. The Israelites did not fight now from any avaricious or ambitious motives ; they did not struggle down there in the Valley of Rephidim, either for the extension of their territory or the glory of their arms, but simply for the preservation of existence.

Secondly : *It was divinely sanctioned on the Hebrew side.* The sacred instinct of self-defence, the command of Moses, the inspired minister of heaven, and the injunction of Jehovah to “write” the facts in a book for the study of future generations, show that it was divinely sanctioned. What-

ever God commands we are bound to do; yes, even though the mandate clash with the clearest dictates of reason, or the deepest and holiest intuitions of conscience and heart. The divine command to the priests of old, to endeavour to destroy the walls of Jericho by blowing a "ram's horn," was opposed to all the dictates of common sense and experience; the lookers-on, no doubt, considered them brainless fanatics as they were executing the divine commission: still they were *bound* to go on. And the divine command to Abraham to offer up his son Isaac would clash with all that was sacred in his heart, and with all that was divine in society, but he was bound to do it. This is reasonable. If there be a God, whatever He commands His creatures, must be binding. Although we are of those who believe, that the settling of national disputes by the sword is as irrational as the attempt to level massive ramparts by blowing through "ram's horns," and as opposed to the most sacred intuitions of humanity, as the killing of an only son; still, if God commands, let us fight. But let us *wait* for the command; let no man seek to destroy ramparts by the breath of his mouth, or terminate the life of his child by his own hands, until God command:—let us not sin, either against our reason or our heart,—play the maniac or the fiend, without a *special* command.

Thirdly: *It was evidently judicial on the Hebrew side.* There was no way for the Jews to avoid this encounter. The Amalekites came up against them, and the preservation of their lives, and the command of God, bound them to engage in the struggle. No doubt, this was intended as a punishment upon them for their constant murmurings. What is a "judgment from God"? *That calamity over which man has no control.* I call the yawning earthquake which engulphs a city, the pestilence which no science can understand or arrest, the famine, when the heavens are sealed and the soil becomes dust;—I call these judgements. But for the sake of all that is consistent in language, clear in thought and sacred in truth, let us not call any war a judgment from God which has been amply discussed by

the tribune, the press and the senate, and upon which men entered deliberately and free. Now, how few of modern wars are purely *defensive*? And are there any that have been divinely sanctioned, and can be truly considered as "judgments" from God?

This fragment of Jewish history may be viewed—

II. AS THE RECORD OF A WAR SUGGESTING PRINCIPLES OF GENERAL APPLICATION. What are the principles here suggested?

First: *The propagating influence of evil.* What do you think induced the Amalekites now to wage war with the Israelites? I am inclined to go back some centuries for the cause, and I find it in the injury which Jacob, the father of the Israelites perpetrated upon his brother Esau at the death-bed of Isaac, their father. (Genesis xxvii. 18-29.) That base and atrocious act of Jacob, though it was forgiven by God, yet lived in the memory of men; it was handed down from sire to son, and kindled indignation in every mind it entered: and now, in the valley of Rephidim, an opportunity occurred for its expression. God only knows the influence of one evil act; if you injure a neighbour, his children's children may revenge themselves upon yours, even ages hence.

Another principle suggested is:—

Secondly: *The Divine liberty allowed to wicked men.* God could have prevented these Amalekites from attacking his chosen people; but he allowed them full freedom to work out their revengeful passions. And thus it is ever. Herod determined to martyr John, and the Jews to crucify the Messiah, and heaven prevented them not. Does not this fact in human history prophecy of retribution?

Another principle suggested is:—

Thirdly: *The variety of instrumentality by which God works out his designs.* How did he now deliver the Israelites from their enemies? He could have done so directly by a volition, but he put into operation secondary agencies; Joshua must be their leader, Moses must lift up his hand

to heaven and expose the mystic rod, and Aaron and Hur must also come to their help. The eternal ever works by means.

Another principle suggested is:—

Fourthly : *The dependence of man's progress on his relation to heaven.* “And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed.” The lifting up of his hand, probably, was but a symbol of the lifting up of his soul to God in prayer; so long as that soul seemed rightly engaged, the tide of war flowed in favour of the Israelites, but when his devotion seemed to flag, there was a reaction. Human progress has invariably its reaction. There seems at times a retrogression, and probably, the retrogression ever arises from the flagging of the devout element.

The narrative suggests—

Fifthly : *The importance of transmitting to posterity the agency of God in history,* “And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for a memorial in a book.” This is the first account we have of writing, and it suggests that God is the originator of that art which has exercised such a universal influence on the destinies of the race. “Write” what you see of God in human history in a book.—*Write, it is a Divine art, use it for a Divine purpose.*

This fragment of Jewish history may be regarded:—

III. AS THE RECORD OF A WAR SYMBOLIZING THE MORAL STRUGGLE IN WHICH THE GOOD ARE ENGAGED. Regarding it in this view, it illustrates three facts in the *spiritual history of the good.*

First : *That the good have spiritual enemies to contend with.* The New Testament speaks of the christian life as a battle;—points out the armour, and describes the *only* tactics that will ensure the victory. Perhaps the enemies may be all ranged under three grand divisions: *practical materialism*—material ideas of *pleasure, dignity, and religion*, are veritable and deadly foes to spiritual progress:—*practical selfish-*

ness—the habits of self-aiming, self-seeking, self-centering, are evermore opposed to the true interest of our being :—*practical atheism*—the soul can no more advance in power, greatness, and true blessedness, without the *consciousness* of God, than the landscape can bloom without a sun. These, then, are our moral Amalekites with which we must do battle in the valley.

Secondly : *That the victory which the good is to obtain over these enemies depends on the help of others.* Israel won the battle in Rephidim because it had a *leader* :—Joshua was their chieftain ; because it had a *stimulus* :—the *rod* was held up to their eye, and when they saw that rod, they would remember the wonders of the Nile, the dividing of the Red Sea, and the cleaving of the rock, and these memories would give new energy to their courage, new fire to their inspiration ; and because it had an *intercessor* :—Moses was pleading with God for them. Now, the good man, in his spiritual encounter, has in *Christ*, a *leader*, a *stimulus*, and an *intercessor* too.

Thirdly : *That whatever may be the amount of help obtained in the struggle, the victory must ever be ascribed to God.* “And Moses built an altar, and called the name Jehovah-Nissi—the Lord is my banner.” It is through His redemptive provision, His truth, and His Spirit, that the battle is to be won.

SUBJECT :—*Christ Stilling the Tempest.*

“But without a parable, spake he not unto them : and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples. And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, let us pass over unto the other side. And when they sent away the multitude,” &c.—Mark iv. 34-41.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-fifth.

CANUTE’S royal mandate was disregarded by the sea. Christ’s was heard and promptly obeyed. How thrilling the voice that rose above the tempest-roar of the storm, and subdued

it to silence! To human appearance it was a perilous position. Christ and his disciples were all there. One billow more, and the agitated seamen and their sleeping master, will be in one common grave. This is a crisis. Such crises are abundant in individual and social history. We have all felt that *another* wave—one more disaster—an *added* loss—a *repeated* attack, would be *fatal*; but behind the whole there has been a vigilant eye, and a restraining hand. That dreaded *other*—that fearful “*one more*” has been checked by the invisible power. Imagine, in the case described in the text, that a host of Scribes and Pharisees are standing around the margin of the Galilean lake—their eyes straining to catch a sight of the vessel—their energies gathering for one frantic shout of triumph in the event of its sinking—they believe that Christianity is now at the mercy of the storm, and if it were but sunk, their joy would be full! We have repeatedly seen this supposed case actually realized. Infuriated men have been anxiously looking for the downfall of some great principle—the ruin of some noble cause; but the God of truth has spoken, and the “war of elements” has been hushed into peace. God always appears at the right moment. All the seas in the universe cannot drown the vessel which God accompanies. There may be peril—there will be trial—but *destruction* is impossible. God might *prevent* difficulties, but there is a greater proof of his power and love, in *controlling* them for wise purposes, than there would be in forbidding their occurrence. We know not what God *prevents*, but we do know, and are thankful for, what he *over-rules* for our moral progress and his own glory. Difficulty has a purpose and a mission. The wildest storm in nature is fraught with ultimate good: the spirit of love speaks in the thunder and rides on the lightning.

The following thoughts are suggested by the text:—

I. HERE IS AN ILLUSTRATION OF OUR SAVIOUR'S COMPOUND NATURE. In the “hinder part of the ship” (v. 38.)

he is lying *asleep* as a man. Weary with his labour, he seeks repose. Behold the *man*! Rising from his slumber he speaks with authority, and the sea obeys. Behold the *God*! So, at the grave of Lazarus. His tears are human—his voice divine. We confess this is a deep mystery. Yet, if there be any meaning in language, and any truth in history, we are bound to receive it. We carry about with us a similar mystery. How can the spiritual and the physical be united. What is that within you which throbs in the heart, glances in the eye, and serves in the hand? What is that subtle and immortal thing which gives birth to thought, directions to life, and purpose to will? What is that which fills you with holy ambition—hangs before you pictures of future bliss, and inspires you with hope, energy and faith? Consciousness denies that it is *matter*. Tell us then how to explain *this* mystery of the union of *mind* and *body*: if no explanation can be given, we cannot discard our Lord's compound nature, simply because our feeble understanding is unable to comprehend the mysterious alliance. We rejoice in the God-man. We rejoice to think of the *manger* and the *throne* as one; we are glad to see the crown of universal dominion on the brow that was pierced by the crown of thorns. The eye that first looked on a completed world, only gathers additional lustre from the tear of sympathy which once gushed from it. (Luke xi. 35.) Christians! Be of good courage. God knows the meaning of temptation. He knows the terror of the storm;—appeal to him, and he will rebuke the sea, rather than "one of these little ones should perish."

II. THE DISCIPLES SHEWED THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST'S DIVINITY. You will observe, that they did not pray to *God the Father*. They had an intelligent conviction of the Saviour's God-head. A thousand proofs of it had he given to *others*, and now that they were in perilous circumstances *themselves*, they appealed to the same power. Learn a lesson from this: you have known many of your kinsmen and fellow-creatures

who have been blessed by Christ ;—when *you* are in difficulty, profit by their example, by going to *him* at once. Shew the depth of your religion by the strength and earnestness of your faith. Beware, lest Christ's Divinity is simply an article in your *creed* and not a governing principle in your *heart*. Realize it as a *fact*—depend upon it as a *certainty*—appeal to it as a *reliable* source of religious influence and help. Keeping this steadily in mind you may brave the dangers of the deep or the horrors of the wilderness !

III. HERE IS A TYPE OF A CLASS OF MEN WHO ALWAYS APPEAL TO THE SUPERNATURAL IN SEASONS OF TROUBLE. Adversity is sent to *drive* those whom prosperity would never lead. On the mount of success there are few altars piled to memorialize the love of God ; but in the valley of sorrow there are many erected whereat to supplicate his aid ! Men who *pray* in the storm, should give *thanks* in the sunshine. Whatever may be our coldness, or our practical scepticism in time of joy, we all cry for the 'supernatural in the presence of pain, grief, death, and the grave ! Memory is busy with the past—conscience utters maledictions on the ungrateful heart, and the anxious hand thrusts itself right through the 'clouds and the stars into the other world to catch the robe of the divine Majesty, and there it clings in an agony conflicting between hope and fear. Poor Saul ! when the heavens were closed against him, his swollen heart sought relief in crying for Samuel ! There are times in heart-history when we seem shut up to God—when only one course is left open. Those are the times for studying Christianity with effect. We, then, occupy the proper ground of observation—then we see its divine dignity, and commune with its pure spirit.

IV. FAITH IN THE RECTITUDE OF GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT WILL SUSTAIN US IN EVERY CRISIS. The Leibnitzian theory of "Optimism," is subtle and philosophic as such ; but there is something higher and nobler than this. He,

who can say, "All is for the best," has attained the victory of religious faith—"the victory which overcometh the world." It is a high point,—difficult of access. He who waits patiently for the completion of God's dealings will assuredly be a happy man. Often, when we have been beset with difficulty, when the tempestuous billows have risen high, and their thunder-voice has broken in doleful tones on our ear, we have been forced to exclaim, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And, lo! the kind One has spoken peace to the storm. Often the lion's den has become a pavilion, and the seven fires which were intended to destroy, have been moulded into a sun, to lighten and to cheer!

V. TRIALS ARISE IN THE DISCHARGE OF DUTY. Trials are not always sent to punish,—they are not always a proof that we are out of the way of duty. The disciples, remember, were in the very act of carrying out what Christ commanded, when this storm arose. "And the same day when the even was come, he saith unto them, let us pass over unto the other side." (v. 35.) This is an important verse, inasmuch as it proves that men may be overtaken with trial when they are obeying God. We are too apt to think that when men are in trouble, they have been breaking some of God's commandments, and that vengeance is being rendered to them. Do not say, that God has forsaken you, simply because you are visited with trouble. Christ may be in the very vessel which is threatened with destruction. Attend to duty. Work out your own convictions. Never sail towards Tarshish instead of Nineveh. Be sure that God is with you, and you may defy the world.

Thus much for the incident:—it is full of holy lessons.

First: *Let us undertake no enterprise in which Christ does not go along with us.* Without him, we shall be without eyes to see, and without hands to defend. Never think

of travelling life's journeys and sailing life's voyages without the divine presence. Let our prayer ever be, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (Exodus xxxiii. 15.) Seek divine companionship, and follow divine guidance.

Secondly : *Distinguish between a permissive and an ordinary providence.* This storm was permitted. Some men by thoughtless act or vicious behaviour create storms about themselves, and then flee to God for protection. When they have done their utmost to violate all moral and natural law, they talk about the mysterious dealing of divine providence ! It is but right that when men oppose God, that they should be punished for their sin. It is wrong, therefore, to *create* a tempest, and then console yourself by singing—

"He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Thirdly : *As we cannot have Christ's bodily presence, there is the greater scope for the exercise of faith.* There is a blessing in reserve for those who believe *without* seeing. (John xx. 20.) Keep your faith alive—fix its eagle eye right on the centre of the sun. Believe in the God of the storm, and he will crown your faith with inconceivable reward. It would indeed be delightful to gaze on the unveiled presence of the Saviour—but we shall love him none the less because *obedience* preceded *sight*.

Fourthly : *Sinner ! shall all nature respond to the voice of Christ, and wilt thou be silent ?* Shall the stars whirl their harmonious revolutions—shall the storm hold its raging breath—in obedience to the divine command, and will thy heart not yield to the entreaties of mercy ? Sad thought ! that man alone is the jarring note in creation's anthem. There are storms in his moral nature which refuse to be quieted ;—there are fires within him on which tears have been shed and blood has been spilt, and still they burn !

Be softened ! Consider thy greatness—thy nature—thy destiny. Christ has spoken—his tones are full of love : in sight of his cross and his grave, I call upon thee to join the concert and heighten the strain which the green earth and the blue heaven are evermore sending upward to his throne.

Banbury.

JOSEPH PARKER.

SUBJECT :—*Spiritual Qualification for the Reception of the Spiritual.*

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”—1 Cor. ii. 12.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-sixth.

INTRODUCTION.—General illustrations of the fact, that there are many free gifts which one man seeks to present to another, which the other cannot receive without spiritual sympathy with the giver.* Sometimes the person for whom a surprise is prepared, has no spirit to understand the kindness that has dictated it, or to appreciate the gift itself ;—and so the gift is thrown away.

I. THERE ARE MANY THINGS FREELY GIVEN TO US BY GOD. Of course, the gifts that are the least exclusive are the most free. The lavish and skilful hand which has adapted the world to man by the excess of bounty, often hides from us the fact that we *might* have had to contend with “conditions of existence” that *could* only have been the causes of wretchedness. “The great things of his law” are “free gifts.” Pardon, holiness, “heaven upon earth,” are free gifts. Christ is “the unspeakable gift” “given up for us all”—a gift not to be recalled, “for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance ;” and “eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

* Coleridge and his guest. The Picture that was made into a Floor Cloth, &c.

II. THESE FREE GIFTS MUST BE KNOWN AND APPRECIATED, OR THEY WILL NOT BE RECEIVED BY US. Allowing that some free gifts of providence can be *physically* received by the thankless and the fleshly mind, they are only partially received by such: *e.g.*, the nine lepers, the woman who would have stolen away with *half* a blessing. If I do not understand, or appreciate, the labour of the artist—the feeling which he has embodied—he may have given me some sheets of canvass and some ounces of paint, but he *cannot* give me his picture. I should not have received it, because I do not know what he has freely given to me. The musician may freely give me the treasures that have enriched his soul—he may fill the air with melody—my ear-pan may respond physically to all the mysterious harmonies of Bach—and yet “I,” my inner self, through my lack of knowledge, fail to receive a single emotion: so, the Divine Harmonist who would ravish humanity into fellowship with Himself, may ply all instruments of soul and sense, and freely give the harmony of heaven, but these joys are only received by those who know them. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee,” &c. “We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; this is the true God and eternal life.”

III. THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S FREE GIFT IS DEPENDENT ON THE SPIRIT THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED. We are apt to forget and to reverse this truth. It depends on the spirit of a man what is the truth that is forced upon him by any circumstances in which he is placed. Imagine the impressions received, the truths conveyed to a group of men of different spirits, who may be gathered now before Sebastopol; the scientific spirit, the spirit of the historian, of the politician, of the artist, of the soldier, of the philanthropist; they would all receive different things, because they would virtually perceive different objects. The same thing occurs in the repose of spiritual life. If our spirit is

haughty or selfish, how can we know, or receive, free gifts that require for their appreciation self-condemnation and self-forgetfulness? If our spirit is *false*, how can we receive, or know, that which depends on the faithfulness and truthfulness of God? "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If there is no spirit of self-dissatisfaction—no conflict between our actual and ideal life,—how can we appreciate the promise of pardon and life, through the holy Judge and everlasting Friend of the human race? The spirit of a man is open to influences from other spirits. One man may pour his spirit into another's, communicate it to society, enshrine it in the common motives and aspirations of the race. And just as every man has a spirit of his own, so societies, communities, nations, the world itself, may have a spirit which reacts upon the individual spirits which compose them. We speak correctly, if not scientifically, when we speak of the spirit of our age, the spirit of a system, of a *class*, and of the spirit of THE WORLD.

IV. THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD IS UTTERLY INSUFFICIENT FOR THE PURPOSE HERE INDICATED. Endeavour to draw a distinction clearly between "the soul of the world" and "the spirit of the world." The spirit of the world has differed at different times in the world's history. Review the world as it shaped itself to the eye of Paul. Some day the spirit of the world will *be* the spirit of God. Ignorance identifies them *now*. Philosophy tries to prove that they are the same. The apostle was not deluded by the false philosophy of Greece. *We* must not be deceived by the dicta of either France or Germany.

Let us enumerate some characteristics of the spirit of the world—of humanity as a whole, in the days of Paul. First: *Sensuality*. If not sensual now, still it is sensuous and materialistic. But the things given by God are *spiritual* and eternal. "Therefore," &c. Secondly: *Selfishness*. The

government and the army; the proconsul and the priest; the bigotry of the Jews, and the philosophy of the Greeks;—were all selfish. The spirit of selfishness blinds the eye to God's gifts. We suffer as much from the selfishness of trade, of commerce, of politics, of religion, of art, even of philanthropy, as Paul did; though it may be more subtle in its manifestations. "Therefore," &c. Thirdly: *Cruelty*. The harsh repression of natural instincts: parental, filial, conjugal; *e. g.*, the amphitheatre, modes of warfare, court-intrigues. How could a man, reeking with the blood of beasts and men in the circus, or a high-born maiden, gloating over the mangled corpses of the arena and unshamed by illicit love, know the things that were freely given to us of God or understand the grace and purity of Christ? The spirit of the world is materially changed in this respect, but its traces are still to be seen, and they war with God's free gifts. Fourthly: *The love and lust of conquest*. Fifthly: *The love of money*. Sixthly: *Enterprise*. But in all these respects, in proportion as we catch and embody the spirit of the world, we incapacitate ourselves for knowing or receiving the things freely given to us of God.

V. THE RECEPTION AND EMBRACE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD WILL STRIKE A RELATION AT ONCE BETWEEN OUR UNDERSTANDING AND THE TRUTH,—between our hearts and the divine appeals to our feelings—between our wills and the calls of duty and self-sacrifice. "The spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." We may have this spirit if we will; we have quenched and resisted more of this spirit than is enough to do for us all we want. Receive the spirit. Pray for an abundance of it. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Leeds.

J. H. REYNOLDS, B. A.

SUBJECT:—*The One Question of Humanity, and its many Answers.*

“If a man die, shall he live again?”—Job xiv. 14.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-seventh.

I. THE ONE QUESTION.

First: *It has always been asked.* In all periods of history it has been proposed; time has not diminished its interest; it will always spring naturally from man's heart.

Secondly: *It is asked everywhere.* It is the question of all nations and of all conditions of men. It is universal—an eminently *human* question.

Thirdly: *It arises in varied circumstances.* The brevity and the vicissitudes of life, the sufferings of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked; premature deaths, bereavement, and the expectation of our own dissolution, suggest it.

Fourthly: *It is asked with different feelings.* With despair. The Atheist. With hope and desire. “To be or not to be, that is the question.” “Whence comes this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after immortality?” With terror.—The murderer, the tyrant, the impenitent, the backslider. It is asked in triumph, “Art thou not from everlasting to everlasting, O God, mine holy one?” We shall not die. The fact that this question is asked, and so asked, is significant. Does not the instinct imply something which corresponds with it?

II. THE MANY ANSWERS. *There are three different answers.*

First: *The negative, or that of Atheism.* “There is no God, and there can be no immortality.” This is an assertion without proof. Who can prove it? This does not satisfy the questioner. The history of the world proves that man will not receive this answer. The French Revolution is eloquent on this subject.

Secondly: *The neutral, or that of secularism.* "We do not know, but it matters not." However, it does matter. Then we cannot help feeling interested in it. Secularism will die, but man's interest in immortality will not.

Thirdly: *The affirmative, or that of Christianity.* Most men have answered *yes*. But the affirmative responders have greatly varied in tone and import. The answer of Christianity alone is full and assuring. (1.) It is calm and dignified. "I am the resurrection and the life." (2.) It proclaims a complete immortality. According to it, the whole of man is to be perpetuated and perfected in eternity. *We shall be like him.* There is a spiritual body. (3.) It is practical. "We *look not* at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." (4.) It is holy in its influence. "He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

RICHARD HANCOCK.

SUBJECT: *The Trial-bearing Force of Spiritual Religion.*

"And the king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."—2 Sam. xv. 25-26.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-eighth.

ONE of the excellencies of the Bible is, that it illustrates the various moral principles which form the character and determine the destiny of humanity in the life and actions of men. Principles in *this* book are not discussed as abstractions, but recorded as incarnations. You see them in human form and fact.

In this chapter David and Absalom appear as the embodiments and representatives of two opposite principles of action;—*love of power, and love of God.* In Absalom you have the one, and in David the other.

The *love of power* is an element in our spiritual constitution, implanted for benevolent purposes ; and when properly directed, like all other *native* principles, subserves the most important ends. Like fire or water, as a servant it is a great blessing, but as a master, a great curse. When it grows into a passion, ascends the throne, and grasps the sceptre, it puts down conscience, and turns the man into a ruthless tyrant ; ever ready to violate all the laws and trample on all the rights of his species. It had gained this power now in the breast of Absalom ; and four evils of character are here developed as the consequence :—

First : *Filial rebellion*. Inspired by this ambitious impulse, Absalom now cast off the authority of David, not only as his sovereign, but as his parent. He was determined to force his way to the throne and to banish, as an exile, the man whom nature, law, and religion, commanded him to reverence and obey. When once ambition gains ascendancy in the soul, the strongest claims, and the highest rights of man, are but as dust in the balance of all its purposes and plans.

Another evil of character which is here developed as the result of this passion is :—

Secondly : *Mean-spiritedness*. In order to gain his ends see what mean manœuvres he adopts : he rises early in the morning, he goes “beside the way of the gate” where men resorted to have their social disputes settled by the judgment of the king ; and here he clandestinely endeavours to undermine his father’s authority with the people, and to insinuate himself into their affections. He intimates that were he king, he would settle disputes after a more just fashion. “Oh” said he to the people, “that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!” And then, too, the crouching, mean-spirited man that did him obeisance, he took and “kissed.” And in this manner it is said that “Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.” Men, indeed !—rather base flunkeys, who suffer their hearts

to be stolen thus. But in this, alas! you have a picture of what men, who seek power as their grand aim have often done, and are generally doing. They will flatter the men they despise, and fawn on the people when they require their suffrage. The conduct of the ambitious aspirant towards the people is well described by the psalmist; "He croucheth and humbleth himself to draw them into the net." Oh! the weakness of the people to be thus cajoled. Yet it has ever been so. Let a prince shake the people by the hand, as Absalom did, and they will forget their own self-respect, their grievances, and even his tyrannies, and follow him. The people must have a higher *moral* education, before they can obtain a better government.

Another evil of character which is here developed as the result of this passion is:—

Thirdly: *Religious hypocrisy*. Absalom resolves on leaving his home for Hebron, in order to raise an army by which he might force his way to the throne. But to leave his home he must first have the consent of his royal father. How does he obtain this consent? Under the pretence of paying a vow which he had promised to render unto the Lord in Hebron. "I pray thee let me go and pay my vow," &c. (verses 7-9.) Wicked men have often sought and won their wicked ends in the holy name of religion.

Another evil of character which is here developed as the result of this passion is:—

Fourthly: *Under-handed cunning*. "And Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel," &c. (verses 10-12.)

Such are some of the evils of character connected with this undue love of power.

In striking and glorious contrast with this, we have the principle of *love of God*, or spiritual religion, developed in the character of David, before us. All the iniquitous doings of his son Absalom, were now brought to the ear of David. He heard that his son had succeeded in raising an army against him—that he had won the people to his cause; and the injured father, and rightful sovereign, to save his life, vacated the throne, fled

from Jerusalem, passed over Kidron, and made his way for the wilderness. How did the monarch, thus driven from his throne, his residence, his people, with his life every moment in jeopardy, and all this arising from his own son, feel under his aggravated trials? Is his spirit shaken by the tempest of fear, or does it burn with the fires of indignation? No! he is self-possessed and calm. Listen to his words in the language of the text, "And the king said unto Zadok," &c.

Here, then, observe the *trial-bearing force of spiritual religion*. How does religion thus bear up the spirit under trial? The religious state of David's mind, as manifest in the text, will enable us to answer the question.

I. SPIRITUAL RELIGION ENGAGES THE SUPREME ATTENTION OF THE SOUL UNDER TRIAL. In the very midst of his trials, when the exciting force of adverse circumstances had reached their height, there was *one* thing nearer to his heart than anything else, and that was the ARK. "And the king said unto Zadok, carry back the ark into the city," &c. *The ark was to David, what the Bible is to us*. From it he derived instruction in the will of God; it contained the law, it had the propitiatory, it radiated the divine glory, its history was a record of Almighty and miraculous achievements. "Carry back the ark." As if he had said, My tenderest associations are connected with that ark; my highest hopes for myself, my country, and my race, are identified with that ark. "Carry back the ark;" let it be taken care of, though my throne be destroyed and I driven from my country, wander the earth an exile, and find no rest but in a beggar's grave.

Spiritual religion has a power to *absorb* the soul; and absorbing it, gives it power to endure trials.

Two facts will illustrate this branch of our subject:—

First: *That whatever subject has the most power to draw away the mind from itself, will always be effective in supporting it under trials*. The depressing influence of a trial depends greatly upon the amount of attention which the man gives to it. Sorrows swell, as thought broods over

them; the smallest cloud upon the inner firmament blackens and spreads until it encompasses the soul in midnight, as we allow our attention to settle upon it. Let the mind be drawn away from itself, and the dungeon shall loose its dreariness, and the rack and flame, their agony.

Secondly: *Of all subjects, religion has the most power to draw away the mind from itself.* David felt more interest in the ark now, than he felt in the loss of his throne, the wreck of his kingdom, the peril of his life. And so the good man ever feels in his religion. What a soul-abstracting power has Christianity!—Look at it how you please,—look at it as a history of the past, or as a prophesy of the future, look at it as a system of truth, or as a revelation of love, and of all the divine perfections; and what power can you imagine more effective to engross the entire attention of man? Paul felt this: “Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss,” &c. If the philosophic dictum be true, that all *sensation is in the soul*; that soul can feel but little, if any, pain, whose thoughts and sympathies are absorbed in Christianity. Oh to live in this upper and enchanting realm of thought!

We learn from the feelings of David in the text:—

II. THAT SPIRITUAL RELIGION RECOGNIZES GOD’S SUPERINTENDENCE UNDER TRIAL. “If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again.” He saw God in his trials. He regarded the superintendence of God, as being *personal, sovereign, and adequate.*

First: *He regarded it as personal.* If “I shall find favor.”
 I. There are some who do not believe in God’s superintendence of the world at all; there are others who believe in His superintendence over the whole, but not over the part; the great, but not over the small. The good man believes in his superintendence over every part of the universe, even the minutest. David regarded God as having to do with *him*, individually. This view is as reasonable as it is scriptural.

Secondly : *He regarded it as being sovereign.* If "I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he *will* bring me again," &c. As if he had said, It is all with Him ; everything connected with my future life and destiny depends upon His WILL. "Our times are in His hand." "Go to now," &c.

Thirdly : *He regarded it as being adequate.* If it is agreeable to His mind, "he will bring me again." He has the power to do so. All that is required, is His will. "He is able to do exceedingly, abundantly," &c. There is no peril that He cannot deliver from, no want that He cannot supply, no desire that He cannot fully satisfy.

Does not religion, by giving us this view of God's superintendence, give us a power to bear up under the greatest trials? Let me feel amidst the most distressing events, that there is a Being whose eye is on *me*, whose will is love for *me*, and whose arm is Almighty to help *me*, and with this feeling I shall rise buoyant above every wave of trouble.

III. THAT SPIRITUAL RELIGION IDENTIFIES MAN'S WILL WITH GOD'S, UNDER TRIAL. "But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee ; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth him good." A thorough surrender of our being and will to God is the *first* duty of all intelligences, and the necessary condition of all true progress in power and blessedness. "Into thine hands I commit my spirit"; this language, which is generally applied to the dying act of the saint, is in truth most literally applicable to the *first* act of a religious life. The creature's will should always move with the will of God in the same line, for the same reason. God's will is absolutely right, and essentially benevolent ; harmony with it, therefore, is the only *virtue*, and the only *happiness*. What is the will of a being, but the expression of his nature? If God's nature be malevolent, the volition will be so, and we may well tremble at it, and rebel against it ; but if the nature be *unmixedly* benevolent, the volition will be so, and we may joyfully acquiesce in it. In *doing*, our language should always be this :—Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? In *suffering*, it should be this :—Not my will, but thine be done.

Who does not see, that with this surrender of ourselves to God, this absorption of our wills in His, or rather this moving eternally within the circle of His will, would secure for us a holy magnanimity and peace, amidst the most trying circumstances of life? All the objects around us move *with*, and *by*, His will; and there is harmony in their motions, and beauty in their forms. Oceans move, and stars revolve, the winds breathe, and the countless tribes of instinct life pursue their varied lines of action by, and with, the will of God. These have no power to do otherwise. Man has, and he has dared to do so. He must fall in again with the great righteous, benevolent, and almighty WILL of the universe to be happy.

SUBJECT:—*The Third Scene in the History of Redeemed Humanity; or, the Age of Moral Reaction.**

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,” &c.—Rev. xx. 7-10.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Thirty-ninth.

THE long ages of earth's millennial glory described in our last sketch are run out. The harmony which had reigned through indefinite centuries is broken into tumult; the sun of absolute truth and blessedness, under whose genial and unclouded beams unnumbered generations had come and gone, getting new vigor and catching new inspiration in every successive step of their mortal life, is veiled in clouds again; the arch-foe of humanity has burst his moral chains—is “loosed out of his prison,” and is once more *deceiving* the nations “which are in the four quarters of the earth.” There is a tremendous reaction.

This age is here presented under a veil of imagery, if possible, more variously coloured and thickly folded than either of the preceding epochs already noticed. Our work is not to *describe* the veil, but gently to draw it aside, in order to discover the great facts which lie beneath. Disrobing this passage of its highly symbolic garb, we discover three facts which will mark the *moral reaction* of this age.

* Continued from p. 126.

I. THE REACTION WILL BE BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE MANNER IN WHICH MANKIND HAVE EVER DEGENERATED. Let us mark the process:—First: *Here is deception.* “The nations” are *deceived*. Certain ideas, directly opposed to the eternal principle of truth, the settled conditions of virtue, and means of true blessedness, but at the same time most plausible to the reason, prompting to the lusts, and gratifying to the self-hood of the human heart, are put into circulation; men receive, follow them, and fall. Sin came first into the world through *deception*, and it has been propagated and nourished by it ever since. Men fall by error, and rise by truth. Hence the seducer and the Saviour alike deal with the judgments of men. Hell and Heaven are acting on our world through thoughts, the one through the false and the other through the true. Secondly: *Here is deception employed by Satan.* “Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations.” Christ, who knows his entire history, has declared that he “abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him;” and that “he is a liar and the father of it.” He has filled the world with lies,—charged our atmosphere with lies—political, social, moral, and religious; “every man walketh in a vain show.” Who can fathom “the depths of Satan”? He “beguiled” our first parents; he prompted Ananias “to lie to the holy ghost.” He “hath blinded the minds” of men. Thirdly: *Here is deception employed by Satan, first upon those who are most assailable, and afterwards through them upon others.* “He goes out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,” &c. No one has been able to determine, with certainty, who Gog and Magog are.* We are inclined to believe with Bloomfield, “That no particular nations are meant, but that these are only names designating bodies of men inimical to the gospel.” Probably through all the ages of the millennial period, there had always continued some disaffected towards Christ, some who loved darkness rather than light, some

* “Great diversity of opinion has been entertained concerning the situation of Gog and Magog, and the various alternatives suggested, have given occasion to no common amount of discussion.”—*Kitto*.

“Gog and Magog.” Upon these, Satan now acted. By his suggestions he evoked their latent depravity, kindled into a flame the long smouldering fires of their rebellion against heaven. The more evil there is in a man, the more accessible that man is to Satan, and the more susceptible of his influence. The more virtue in the heart, the stronger its safeguard. Hence, he ever begins his work with the most assailable—with those who are *morally* the most remote from Christianity, who dwell “in the four quarters of the earth.”* And through them goes on to propagate his cause. From Eve he proceeds to Adam, from Gog and Magog he proceeds to the very “camp of the saints.” We infer:—

II. THE REACTION WILL BE OF A CHARACTER THE MOST THREATENING. There are two things in the passage which suggest this:—

First: *The vast number of its agents.* Those whom Satan enlists in his cause from the “four corners of the earth”—these moral tribes, called Gog and Magog, constitute a great multitude,—“the number of whom is as the sand of the sea:” a figurative expression indicating their *numerousness*. It is not necessary to suppose that these unbelievers had been numerous through all the centuries of the millennial times. Nor is it necessary to suppose that any *genuine Christians* had really and finally been tempted to renounce their principles. It seems to us highly improbable that a man whose nature has been *thoroughly* Christianized will ever finally degenerate into a *life* of sin. We may suppose that for many ages, there were but few whose spirits did not flow with the clear and majestic stream of Christian truth and practice. If however, at one time there were only a dozen, or even fewer, of sinners among the teeming millions of saints, it is easy to see how they could multiply in the course of time, without causing any of the *really* good to apostatize. These

* “It is certain that by the four corners of the earth we are to understand the nations which lay at the greatest distance from the city of the saints, and we may suppose that those who live in that situation shall be least instructed in the gospel, and so capable of being most easily engaged to rise up against it.”—*Doddridge*.

twelve we will suppose, become parents ; their children, on the principle of filial love and dependence, will catch their spirit and be moulded by their example ; they, in their turn become parents ; and thus, according to the common law of generation, in a few years these few may multiply to thousands. Amongst the angels, who do not probably derive their existence from each other, between whom there is not this relation of parent and child, there is not this character—propagating power.

Secondly : *The anti-christian aim of its agents.* “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.” The idea, symbolized, we take to be this : they made efforts to assault the most *central* and *vital* part of religion. They sought, perhaps, to argue away the being of God, the Deity of Christ, the doctrine of human responsibility, the necessity of mediation and the existence of a future life of rewards and punishments. There are minor attacks, which unbelievers make upon Christianity, but the attempt to disprove these fundamentals is a blow aimed at the most vital part : it is to compass “the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.”

III. THE REACTION WILL TERMINATE IN THE EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION OF ALL ITS AGENTS. “And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire,” &c.

From this language we learn the following truths :—

First : *That there is in the universe of God, a distinct local scene, where the wicked of all classes are to receive their righteous retribution.* This is implied in the expression, “lake of fire.” There are other scriptural expressions which imply it ; such as “Gehenna,” “furnace of fire,” &c. Reason would also suggest this. (1.) *All existence implies place.* You may think of space apart from being, but you cannot think of being apart from space. You think of an infinite being in connexion with infinite space, and finite being in connexion with limited locality. (2.) *A wicked existence implies a miserable scene.* Antecedently, we should infer

that the outer scene of a moral being's existence would resemble his moral character and mood. "This world was made for innocence, and it is beautiful," &c. It seems fitting that a dark, disharmonious, deformed, spirit, should have a sunless, tumultuous, and horrid world as its residence. (3.) *Moral beings, of directly opposite sympathies, habits, and aims, as are sinners and saints, imply separate local homes.* There is a mutual repugnance to each others society here, and it is natural to suppose, that when retribution comes, they shall have their "own place." We know not where this place is, whether in the depths of the earth, or in regions far beyond this planet; but we do believe that in some district of the creation, there is a scene without a streak of beauty, a gleam of light, or a drop of goodness;—on which justice frowns and thunders for ever.

Secondly: *That the retribution, which the wicked will endure in this scene, will be of a most terrible description.* "Fire and brimstone." The allusion here is most likely to the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. xix. 24-28; FIRE is the emblem of *suffering*, Zech. xiii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 13-15; 1 Peter i. 7; BRIMSTONE is the emblem of *desolation*, Job xviii. 15. Nothing will grow on any soil that is covered with sulphur. The Bible employs other figures equally terrible, such as "outer darkness," "blackness of darkness," "prison," &c.

Thirdly: *There is no reason to hope, that those who are once committed to this scene, will ever be restored.* And shall be tormented day and night "for ever and ever"—*for ages and ages.* It is natural to desire final restoration, and natural to believe, if possible, what we desire, but we cannot see any evidence sufficient to encourage our hope.

Here, then, is the end of the enemies of Christ. Redeemed humanity, henceforth, will be freed from "Gog and Magog," from the beast and the false prophet, and from the Devil, the prince of darkness for ever and ever. Glorious day! Though countless ages in the future, this faint glimpse of thee adds energy to our faith and brightness to our hope.

But how long will this reaction continue? We have an

answer to this in the third verse of the chapter; "And after that he must be loosed for a little season." Its duration will be short, compared with either of the two following periods:—(1.) *Compared with the preceding period of almost universal holiness.* The period of millennial holiness continued for a thousand years, *i. e.*, either three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, or some immense period of duration. This period of reaction is called a "little season," in relation to that. (2.) *Compared with the succeeding period of perfect holiness to be enjoyed by the redeemed in the heavenly world.* In the twenty-second chapter of this book, it is said of the state and residence of the redeemed, that "There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever."—For ever and ever. What arithmetic can compute the ages contained in this "ever and ever?" All the preceding periods in the world's history are but as a "little season" compared with this "ever and ever;" less than an hour to the geological cycles that are gone; less than a spark to the central fires that light and warm the unnumbered worlds of space.

SUBJECT:—*The Brazen Serpent; an Emblem of Heaven's Antidote in the Gospel of Christ.*

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole," &c.—Num. xxi. 8-9.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fortieth.

IN the third chapter of John, verses fourteen and fifteen, we get a warrant for regarding the extraordinary incident in the text, as an illustration of the spiritual state of humanity and Heaven's merciful interposition on its behalf.

Regarding it in this light, we observe—

I. THAT THE ANTIDOTE PROVIDED IN THE GOSPEL IS FOR A MOST LAMENTABLE EVIL. The affliction under which the Jews were now suffering, resembles sin in three respects.—

It was *imparted*,—they received it from the bite of the serpents.—It was *painful*,—it was a “fiery” bite.—It was *mortal*,—multitudes died. Sin, at first, was imparted to man by the great serpent.—It was an element of fiery suffering.—It produces death. “The wages of sin is death,” &c.

But whilst this affliction of the Jews corresponds in these respects with the spiritual state of mankind, there are points of distinction which should not be overlooked. (1.) One was material, the other is spiritual. (2.) One was a calamity, the other is a crime. (3.) The one would necessarily end in death, the other might continue for ever.

II. THAT THE ANTIDOTE PROVIDED IN THE GOSPEL, ORIGINATED IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. Who devised the means for healing the Jews? Could the most skilful amongst them discover any remedy? “God commanded Moses,” &c. Who could discover a method for saving souls? It could never enter into the heart of Priest or Sage. God originated it. “God so loved the world,” &c.

There are two or three points of difference between the remedies worthy of remark :—

First: *One was apparently arbitrary, the other is manifestly adapted.* Who could discover any fitness between looking at the brazen serpent and relief? But we can see wonderful adaptation in the facts of Christianity to “destroy sin in the flesh.” Secondly: *The one was insensible to the sufferer, the other is filled with sympathy.* That brazen serpent up on the pole there, could not feel for the agony of the thousands beneath, who were looking up for help. Christ is full of feeling. “We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.” Thirdly: *The one was local in its aspect, the other is world-wide in its bearing.* Only the Jews, just in that locality, who were bitten by the serpent could be healed. To others bitten in other localities, it could offer no relief; but the antidote of the gospel is not for a class, a tribe, or a country, but for the race. Fourthly: *The one was temporary in its efficacy, the other is perpetual.* Those who might be bitten in

the next age would receive no relief from that brazen serpent ; but Christ is for all ages. "He ever liveth," &c. "He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever."

III. THAT THE ANTIDOTE PROVIDED IN THE GOSPEL REQUIRES THE PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THE SUFFERERS. First : *The personal application is most simple.* The Jew had merely to *look* in order to be healed. The sinner has simply to *believe* in order to be saved. As looking is the easiest act of the body, so faith is the easiest act of the mind. A man can believe everywhere, and under all circumstances. Deprive him of everything, friendship, learning, health, property, liberty : but give him reason and truth, and he can believe. And then, too, he has a *propensity* for believing he is a credulous animal ; his ruin is, that he believes too much. Secondly : *The personal application is most unmeritorious.* No Jew could refer his healing to the merit of his act. He could not take any credit to himself for what he did ; nor can a man attach the idea of merit to his faith, simply because the act implies no good conferred on another, but all on oneself. Thirdly : *The personal application is the most indispensable.* Those who did not *look*, died. Those who will not believe, will be "damned." Fancy an afflicted Jew refusing to look because he could not understand the *rationale* of the means. Whilst he is speculating, death approaches, and he falls a lifeless corpse ; whereas others by his side, look implicitly, and are healed. This is not more absurd than to see men speculating about the gospel, whilst others, with simple-hearted faith, look, and are saved. Fourthly : *This personal application is ever efficacious.* Every afflicted Jew that looked, however virulent his case, was healed. Every man who believes in Christ, however aggravated and numerous his sins, is saved. "He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him."

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN dealing with this name, historical faith demands the record of doctrinal errors. Let not the modern man, however, tend on their account to self-exaltation, or to depreciation of the father. Rather let him remember, that he owes his advanced position to his predecessors, many of whom were mightier than he, and struggled faithfully with personal and ecclesiastical evils. If such struggles did not always compass a full victory, we of the nineteenth century, might more becomingly exult over the imperfections of the fourth, were we contending with equal honesty against our own foes.

Many of the opinions of Chrysostom, then, are such as might be expected from the character of the times. The doctrines and practices which afterwards came to a head, and demanded the Reformation in the West, had in the fourth century already considerably grown both in the West and East. Yet, so gradual and insinuating was their progress, that not until ages after did it awaken the suspicion even of the wisest churchmen, that they, with the rest, were the unwitting instruments of the subtle powers of evil in furthering, what was afterwards clearly perceived by the same class as lamentable corruption crying aloud to heaven and earth for extermination.

Neither should it be forgotten, that some of the opinions and practices which in the present day would, and perhaps justly, be regarded with aversion, on account of their relations, must, when set in the circumstances of the early church, be estimated differently. What is innocent in the abstract, and in one age absolutely harmless, and even beneficial, may become in another relatively noxious, as the badge of a corrupt party and as symbolizing with a dead

system. The English Puritans, for instance, were forced by the sacred principles of freedom to reject much which, in another and happier age, might be assumed as a comely, and charming, and, therefore, efficient means of edification.

In dealing then with the opinions and practices of Chrysostom, we may distribute them into the three classes of—such as partake of the essence of mediæval error ; such as have come accidentally to be regarded as corrupt ; and, lastly, those which have no direct relation to the chief questions between Romanists and Protestants.

To the first class belong—undue deference to the authority of traditions and councils ; the magnifying of the priesthood ; the primacy of St. Peter,—whom Chrysostom calls “Prince of the apostolic choir, mouth of the disciples, pillar of the church, support of the faith, the foundation of confession, fisher of the universe” ; giving Mary the title of “Mother of God” ; equivocal language on the efficacy of baptism ; connecting the gift of the Spirit with confirmation by the bishop ; calling the eucharist a sacrifice, and the doctrine which was afterwards elaborated into transubstantiation ; the efficacy of prayers for the dead ; faith in relics ; exorcism ; the use of pictures and images in worship ; extolling the monastic life and vows of chastity in both sexes. Yet, on the last subject, his notions seem to have been modified, possibly by the wider experience of later years at Antioch and Constantinople.

Let not the Christian of the nineteenth century exult here in fancied superiority over the fourth century father. Look into thyself, and around thee. What if it should prove when thou has compassed an acquaintance with what is there, that old Chrysostom, the above lamented list notwithstanding, was by far the nobler, and the better Christian, of the two !

Amongst the second class may be mentioned—the use of liturgies, of which many extant are ascribed to his authorship, and others he is supposed to have modified ; the public devotional recognition of the heavenly hosts and of the holy dead ; the use of the sign of the cross, and of the cross itself for decoration.

To come to the third class. Chrysostom evidently held a special inspiration of the Scriptures, and even such an inspiration as, in many passages, belongs not only to the

general meaning, but to the very words. Yet he recognizes the human element, the differences of the authors, and the minor discrepancies in narrations.

He holds the Deity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as of three Hypostases or Persons,—neither confounding them, as Sabellius, nor distinguishing substances, as Arius. He also maintains the eternal generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit from the Father. He maintains two distinct natures and two wills, after the incarnation, in Jesus Christ

He holds, likewise, the doctrine of original sin, which causes the death of infants ; who are, however, saved by Christ.

He believes that God created us free, and masters of our actions, with the power to choose that which we will. That grace not only aids in labours and dangers, but offers its assistance and co-operation in all circumstances. This aid is, however, entirely consistent with the freedom of the will,—is an aid which does not constrain, but persuade. A man may perish if he choose, even after he has been “called.” Yet he holds an election to eternal life, preceding birth and irrespective of character.

According to Chrysostom, Jesus Christ died not only for friends, but also for enemies, for all the world. The Victim which he has offered would be necessary were there only one to be saved, but is sufficient for all ; and if all do not believe, it is because they will not. It is the will of God that all men should be saved, and the reason they are not is, that their will does not agree with the will of God, who does not constrain them.

The great and venerable men by whom the English church was settled at the period of the Reformation, were doubtless familiar with the writings of Chrysostom, and had, probably, been largely inoculated with his theology.

The works of Chrysostom comprise, in the Eton edition of Saville, eight folio volumes, and in the Paris edition of Bernard Montfaucon, a Benedictine Monk, which includes a Latin translation, thirteen folio volumes. The supposition is improbable and unnecessary, that all these were written by his own hand, or that any but the treatises were even elaborated for publication.

They consist of homilies and homiletical commentaries on various parts of Scripture, of epistles, and treatises.

The homilies are on the Pentateuch, the Books of Kings, the Psalms, the Prophets, on Matthew, John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, the first and second to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, the two to the Thessalonians, the two to Timothy, those to Titus and Philemon, and that to the Hebrews. There are, also, very many homilies on separate passages of both the Old and New Testaments, on various moral and religious subjects, and on the birth of Jesus Christ, his baptism, death, resurrection, and ascension, and on the Pentecost. Those on Matthew and Paul's Epistles are the most valued.

In expounding a text, he shews its relations to the context, and the scope of the writer; he unfolds the sentence and its parts, and explains every word. He admits and explains such allegories as are evidently intended, but rejects all mere fancies. He is, however, somewhat prolix and diffuse as an interpreter, and shews in some places a deficiency arising from ignorance of the Hebrew tongue. The other Greek interpreters, as Theodoret, Oecumenius, and Theophylact, have done little more than recast the materials left by Chrysostom.

The epistles are addrest to various persons, Theodore, for instance, whom Chrysostom, in two letters, exhorts not to marry, but to continue faithful to the monastic life. Many of them were written during his exile.

Chrysostom wrote also two books on Compunction; three on Providence; one on Virginity, in two parts; and six on the Priesthood. The last work is a master-piece—throws much light on the character of Chrysostom—shews how elevated was his conception of the office, and comports with his own manner of fulfilling it.

Various liturgies also are attributed to Chrysostom, but with insufficient evidence. It is believed by some, that the Constantinopolitan liturgy was framed by him, on the basis of that of Antioch, which is attributed to James.

As introductory to a few specimens from Chrysostom's writings, some sentences from an oration "For the Temples," addrest to Theodosius the great, by Libanius, the Pagan rhetorician, under whom Chrysostom studied, may be interesting, as shewing the school in which he was trained, and the kind of speech then in vogue. Libanius was ac-

counted the finest rhetorician of that age, and had been an intimate friend of the Emperor Julian. The occasion of this oration was, that from the growing influence of Christianity, many temples had been destroyed, which awakened the fear that the others also were doomed.

“I entreat you, O Emperor, to turn your countenance to me while I am speaking, and not to cast your eyes upon those, who in many things aim to molest both you and me ; forasmuch as oftentimes a look is of greater effect than all the force of truth. . . . Those black-garbed people,* who eat more than elephants, and demand a large quantity of liquor from the people who send them drink for their chauntings ; but who hide their luxury by their pale artificial countenances. . . . these men, O emperor, even whilst your law is in force, run to the temples, bringing with them wood and stones and iron, and when they have them not, hands and feet. Then follows a Mysian prey, the roofs are uncovered, walls are pulled down, images are carried off, and altars are overturned ; the priests all the while must be silent upon pain of death. When they have destroyed one temple, they run to another, and a third, and trophies are erected upon trophies. . . . After innumerable mischiefs have been perpetrated, the scattered multitude unite and come together, and they require of each other an account of what they have done ; and he is ashamed, who cannot tell of some great injury which he has been guilty of. They therefore spread themselves over the country like torrents, wasting the countries together with the, temples for wherever they demolish the temple of a country, at the same time the country itself is blinded, declines and dies. For, O emperor, the temples are the soul of the country ; they have been the first original of the buildings in the country, and they have subsisted for many ages to this time ; and in them are all the husbandman’s hopes, concerning men and women and children, and the seeds and plants of the ground. . . . Wherever any country has lost its temples, that country is lost, and the hopes of the husbandmen, and with them all their alacrity ; for they think they shall labour in vain, when they are deprived of the gods who should bless their labours ; and the country not being cultivated as usual, the tribute is diminished. . . . Moreover, if they hear of any land which has anything that can be plundered, they cry presently, ‘Such a one sacrificeth and does abominable things, and an army ought to be sent against him.’ And presently the reformers are there ; for by this name they call their depredations. . . . Do we think it a cruel thing to cut off a man’s hand, and a small matter to pluck out the eyes of cities ? And do we not lament the ruins made by earthquakes ? And when there are no earthquakes nor other

* The Monks.

accidents, shall we ourselves do what they are wont to effect? Are not the temples the possession of the Emperors, as well as other things? Is it the part of wise men to sink their own goods? Does not every one suppose him to be distracted, who throws his purse into the sea? or, if the master of a ship should cut those ropes which are of use to the ship; or, if any one should order a mariner to throw away his oar, would you think it an absurdity? And yet think it proper for a magistrate to deprive a city of such a part of it?"

Leaving old decrepit Paganism thus fretfully pleading her failing, hopeless, cause; hear the exulting notes of young Christianity in Chrysostom's discourse "Against the Jews and the Gentiles."

"Speaking of the cross, 'This instrument of execution,' says he, has become more honourable than diadems; emperors have substituted it for their crown; it has been placed on the purple; it is employed in prayers, in warfare, at the holy table; and in all places of the earth it shines more than the sun."

The following passages are extracted from the third, fourth, and fifth, books "On the Priesthood."

"A bishop is bound to be sober, modest, vigilant; he must extend his attention to an infinity of subjects, because he has to watch over the conduct of others as his own. He needs great patience and great courage to suffer affronts, violence, hard words, raillery, spoken at hazard, or with premeditated spite. He who cannot on occasion restrain his wrath, ought not to be honoured with the priesthood. The church will have nothing to suffer from its bishop if he does not fast, or walk barefoot; but if he is untractable and furious, his flock will suffer, and he will be unhappy himself. Nothing so much stupifies the mind, or more extinguishes vivacity, as anger, passion which observes neither rule nor measure. As the virtues and good works of the bishops have a great influence on the mind of their peoples, and excite in them much emulation, their faults cause great scandals, and drive into disorder those who are naturally inclined thereto. Even a slight fault tarnishes the lustre and brightness of their virtue; for the world is unjust, and expects of a bishop, who is only a man as others, that he be, like angels, entirely exempt from fault, and attain their perfection.

"The talent of speech and knowledge of the doctrines of religion are necessary to a bishop; without that he cannot give his flock a fitting nourishment, nor refute the enemies of the church. It is not enough even that he be instructed in sacred lore; he ought further to know all the ways of attacking heretics, and of defending himself from their sophisms and tricks; for should he be ignorant of a single

matter, the devil would take advantage of it to surprise him. What will it serve a bishop to confound the Gentiles, if he succumbs to the attacks of Jews or heretics? If not practised in dispute, how will he be able to satisfy the rash curiosity of the Catholics themselves, which is often more capable of embarrassing a bishop than all the arguments of infidels and heretics? If he wishes to impose silence on those who propose such questions, he will be accused of pride or ignorance. He ought therefore on such occasions to use prudence and address; which he cannot do if he fails in knowledge and speech."

To the objection, that Paul seems to disparage "excellency of speech," Chrysostom replies:—

"This consideration has seduced many, and hindered them from taking the needful pains to qualify themselves; which arises from their not having sufficiently observed the elevation of the Apostle's mind and the sense of his words; which only signify, that he knew not all the niceties of language, nor piqued himself on the politeness of Isocrates, the force of Demosthenes, the majesty of Thucydides, the sublimity of Plato; but while leaving to the prophane the vain ornaments of a pompous eloquence, he has excelled in a kind of learning, of which no one can deny him the credit, which renders evident by simple, but natural discourse, the doctrines of religion. It was with this sort of eloquence that he 'confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus,' and that he afterwards triumphed over all his enemies, and converted to the faith thousands of Jews and Gentiles, at Athens, at Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome, the cities which of all the world prided themselves the most on eloquence. Does not the beauty of his letters charm the readers? Find not all the faithful something there to console and instruct? They serve to the church as rampart of defence; there we find the reasons of the obedience we owe to Jesus Christ, and how to abase the haughtiness of the human mind which would exalt itself or revolt against God. They will avail to preserve us against the poison of false doctrines, as rules and instruction for the reformation of our manners; bishops will find there the means of preserving the purity and beauty of the spouse of Jesus Christ; and we shall find there remedies against all the evils which can attack us. . . . Knowledge is necessary to pastors, since it is not sufficient for them to induce to virtue by their good examples those who are confided to them; it is further requisite to exhort them by good discourse. Of what utility is a good life, when the question is to decide disputed doctrines, concerning which both parties rely on the authority of Scripture? What danger to religion to see a bishop vanquished and at a loss for a reply! The simple, instead of blaming his weakness and ignorance, will believe

that the doctrines he defends are untenable; and hence, their faith become floating, they will begin to doubt points which they believed before with immovable certitude.

“It is necessary that they who speak should be capable of two things; the one, to despise the applause of the people, and the other, to speak with force; for if one of these two is wanting to a preacher, the other is useless to him. In fact, if when he is strong enough to be unmoved by human praises, he is incapable of instructing his hearers, and his way of speaking renders him despicable to many, all that magnanimity which raises him above praises is useless. If, on the contrary, having the talent of expressing himself with force and grace in his discourse, he is weak enough to be carried away by the praises and plaudits of those who hear, he may injure others and himself; since the vain desire of praises, which fills him, has a tendency to induce him to employ all his talent rather to render himself agreeable than useful to the people. And, instead of being able to employ his teaching and his eloquence to lead them to benefit, he loves rather by way of complaisance to say things which may please, in order always to draw plaudits and praises. Finally, it becomes a bishop to have neither too much fear, nor too great contempt for the calumnies wherewith he is blackened; but to endeavour to stifle them in their birth, and spare nothing to shelter himself from that which might tarnish his reputation. If, after he has done his utmost to justify himself, his calumniators will not leave him alone, then he may despise what they say about him. Like unto a father, who is not more moved by the caresses of his still tender children than by the blows which they give him; he ought neither to allow his heart to be puffed up by the praises of his hearers, nor be abased by their unreasonable blaming. Nevertheless he should not absolutely reject their praises; neither should he seek them; and he ought to content himself, for the consolation and fruit of his labours, with the witness of his conscience, and to use his eloquence and his teaching only to serve and please God.”

Hearken now to one or two passages from the homilies. The first is from the third of what are termed “Homilies on the Statues.” The imposts which Theodosius had laid on the people of Antioch, in the year 387, had occasioned riots, wherein the imperial statues had been destroyed. Dreading the consequences, the venerable bishop, Flavian, had departed for Constantinople to intercede with the emperor on behalf of the people. These homilies were mostly delivered during the interval of excitement and suspense; the third on the Sunday which preceded the Lent fast, the Sunday which is called in England, Quinquagesima.

"I do not call a fast a mere abstinence from food, but an abstinence from sins; for from its nature fasting is incapable of effacing our sins, unless accompanied with the needful dispositions. It was not the fast, nor sackcloth, nor ashes, which allayed the wrath of God toward the Ninevites; but their works and their change of life. I say this, not to disparage the fast, but to enhance its value; for the glory thereof consists not in abstaining from food, but in fleeing from sin and doing good works. Would you fast, I demand that when you see a poor man, you succour his wretchedness; that you be reconciled with your enemy; that you close your eyes on meeting a strange beauty. Be not content to make the mouth fast, let your eyes, your ears, your hands, and the other parts of your body, fast also. Let your hands fast by abstaining from rapine and avarice; your feet in not going to unlawful spectacles; your eyes in no more gazing about with so much curiosity on all kinds of objects. Looking is the nourishment of the eyes; if criminal, it injures the fast; if innocent, it enhances its price. Would it not be ridiculous to abstain from forbidden meats, and not abstain from evil looking, since the two are equally prohibited? It is needful, moreover, for the ears to fast, and their fast consists in being closed to slanders and calumnies. Let the mouth fast also, in not opening to offer wrongful or dishonourable words Though the evil which you speak of your neighbour should be true, it is always a crime to speak it. . . . If slanderers were well persuaded that we have a greater aversion to them than to those whom they speak evil of, they would correct so ill a habit. . . . Do you so greatly fear a rigorous vengeance for the injury done to the emperor in his images? gain therefrom some idea of the severity wherewith God will another day punish wrongs done to men, who are His images, as well as the blasphemies whereby He is directly outraged Three things are required of you during the fast; —to speak ill of no one; to free yourselves of all malice; and to renounce oaths and blasphemies; that after uprooting these three vices, you may the more easily vanquish the rest, and reach towards perfection."

Take now a portion from a Homily on Almsgiving.

"The fine weather relieves the poor during summer; they have nothing to fear, even if naked; the sun's rays serve instead of clothing; they can lie on the earth without inconvenience, and pass the night in the air; they want neither shoes nor wine; a little bread with water suffices for their nourishment; the season furnishes them with vegetables; labour is less hard, and they do not want for work. It is not the same for them in winter; hunger afflicts them; cold is an insupportable pain; they need stronger nourishment, warmer clothes,

shoes, a place of shelter; they find no work, and gain nothing . . . In Macedonia, Rome, and Galatia, each laid by in store, according to Paul's counsel, on the first day of the week, that is on Sunday, that which he intended giving for the maintenance of the poor; and this apostle chose that day in preference to others, not only because it is a day of rest when the mind is more free and in a humour to give, but also because of the prodigies which were wrought on this day in our favour. . . . God, in instituting almsgiving, had not in view only to relieve the necessity of the poor; He wished to provide the rich with great opportunities of virtue; almsgiving is more useful to him that gives than to him that receives; for if God had considered only the interest of the poor, He would have been satisfied with binding the rich to furnish them with necessaries; He would not have mentioned the promptitude with which they must give; but the apostle commands the faithful to give their alms with joy and readiness. Let us not then be peevish when asked for alms, nor fear lest we diminish our incomes. In almsgiving we take more care of our own interest than of the interests of the poor, and we receive more than we give. There are some who investigate too curiously the country, the life, and the manners of the poor, their trade, their constitution, and who make a crime of their health. . . Behold why many are forced to counterfeit the maimed; that this feigned calamity may touch us and soften our hardness. We are more criminal for failing in charity during winter; we ought not to take it ill if they do not labour; it is because they find no one to employ them or give them work. We reproach the poor for an idleness which is excusable; but we pardon an idleness in ourselves which is more criminal. 'I have property,' you say, 'which my ancestors have left me'; do you then believe that a poor man should die of hunger because his ancestors were not rich? On that very account he ought to excite your compassion. You again reproach the poor with being fugitive, wretched, vagabonds, knaves, who have abandoned their country to come and inundate yours. Is it for that, that you are angry? Would you deprive this city of her greatest advantage, that she is regarded as the asylum of the world? Blenish not so glorious a praise. With what excuse can we cover our inhumanity, if we will not nourish those who come to seek us, and throw themselves into our arms? We drive away the poor, we wish them to be punished, we whose consciences reproach us with crimes so great. You shall be judged as you have judged others. Be charitable to your brethren, and your sins shall be forgiven, however grievous they may be. Imitate your Heavenly Father, who makes His sun shine on the good and on the evil; assist the poor, give bread to the hungry, console the afflicted, and be not anxious further; for if you amuse yourselves by

investigating the manners of those who demand alms, this unseasonable curiosity will chill your charity."

Another very favourite subject with Chrysostom was the rapid spread of Christianity, from the force of its own excellence and its witnessing miracles. The following extracts are from the fourth, fifth and sixth, homilies on the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

"The death of Jesus Christ extols his triumph; and he is infinitely more admirable from triumphing over death itself, after dying, than if he had been exempted from suffering it : as he cured blindness by a thing suited to augment it, namely, with clay, so he converted to himself all the world by the cross, which in itself was likely rather to keep them at a distance and to cause him scandal. The evangelists by recording in their writings the meanness of the apostles, their timidity and their defects, have furnished a great proof of the truth of the evangelic history. If Socrates and the other sages of the world were unable to effect the establishment of their doctrines among men, but even lost their lives for having introduced novelties, we cannot be enough astonished that simple fishermen should have subdued to theirs, not only the Greeks, but even the most barbarous nations.

"The apostles must have been demented, to have undertaken by themselves, and without relying on the assistance of divine grace, so great a work as that of converting all the earth. A Theudas and a Judas who had collected a great multitude, having perished miserably with their disciples, this example alone would have been capable of producing a great fear in the minds of the apostles, to deter them from those extraordinary enterprises; had they not been moreover persuaded, that victory in such affairs was impossible without the divine power: it was further necessary in exposing themselves to so many dangers, that they should have in view future benefits, and that they should be well persuaded that the things which they announced touching Jesus Christ had occurred in the manner which they said; otherwise they would have irritated God against them, and drawn on their heads the bolts of Heaven. If Jesus Christ had not arisen, why should the apostles publish everywhere that he had? Some will say, they did it from love to him. But they would rather have had reason to hate him, for deceiving them, seducing them from their homes, and making them abandon all things for a false hope wherewith he long amused them. The Jews gave money to the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre of Jesus, to publish that the disciples had secretly carried off his body; if these same disciples had publicly declared that he had not risen, what honours and recompenses would they not have received from the Jews! When, therefore, tho'

they might have derived so great advantages from denying that Jesus had risen, they loved rather to expose themselves to an infinity of outrages and perils in publishing his resurrection, they must have been persuaded that they were moved to publish it by a divine power, which is stronger than all earthly considerations. All the world knew the death of Jesus Christ; they had seen him fastened to the cross, at noonday, in a capital city, on a very grand festival, when the Jews were obliged to be present; but the disciples alone had seen him after his resurrection. All agreed that he was gone. How then did the apostles expect to be able to persuade all the earth that he had arisen? If the soldiers, spite of the miracles which they had seen at the moment of the resurrection, resolved to publish the contrary, by what means could the disciples expect to persuade the world without the assistance of miracles, they who were not in a condition to give a single obolus to bribe the witnesses? If it should be said that they wrought no miracles, we must avow that it was a far more extraordinary marvel without that aid to persuade the whole earth. Another mark of divine power in the establishment of Christianity is, that the apostles had for enemies in preaching the gospel, not only the Jews, but the Romans also, who would not that any other king should be recognized than Caesar. Besides, what they had to say concerning Jesus Christ had nothing to recommend it before men: he had been crucified; he was born of a Jewish woman married to a carpenter. Behold what they preached; yet they succeeded in their design, and wrought therein things which were beyond human power; it is therefore indubitable, that a grace all divine operated effects so great.

"If you seek signs and wonders you will find them still; if you consider the great number of predictions in scripture, and if you reflect on the conversion of all the earth, on the Christian philosophy of the most barbarous peoples, on the change of manners by men the grossest and most savage, and on the wonderful progress of piety in all the world:—all these things had been predicted and are accomplished, as well as the predictions made by Jesus Christ on the duration and the immovable firmness of his church; but they would not have been accomplished, had they been mere inventions of the human mind. Had not Jesus Christ always been with the church as he promised, she would never have been able to overcome all the enemies who have arisen against her, nor could the gospel have spread throughout the earth, as it has done. Besides, if we consider those who have written against us, we shall sufficiently learn from that alone, the antiquity of our sacred books; for they could not have wished to refute writings which were not in existence until after; besides the consent of all the earth which has received them ought to suffice to establish their truth; but the consent would not have been

so unanimous from one extremity of the world to the other, if the grace of the divine spirit had not operated; and the imposture of the inventors of the new doctrine would have immediately been discovered. Finally, all the predictions concerning the establishment of the gospel throughout the earth, were not made by the first Christians only, but many of them centuries before by the most ancient prophets. This is a fact which no one can deny, since the books which contain these prophecies are still in the hands of our enemies; and the Greeks, curious about them, have taken care to translate them into their tongue. 'Why then,' do you say, 'do not all men yet believe the gospel?' We ought to ascribe the cause only to ourselves; for at the commencement of the church, unbelievers were not drawn to the faith by the mere sight of miracles, but chiefly by the example of the good life of Christians; this was truly angelical; and if we lived in the same way now, we should immediately convert all the earth, without the assistance of miracles."

The following, from the fourteenth homily on Timothy, is instructive as a picture of the interior of monasteries, and as a specimen of Chrysostom's power of description.

"The monasteries are genuine houses of sorrow, where we see only ashes, hair cloths, and solitude. There is never found laughter, nor vain joy, nor care for secular concerns. Fasting and austerity are practised there, with lying on the ground. There is seen neither steam of meats, nor blood of animals, nor tumult, nor embarrassment; it is a tranquil haven, and the solitaries who are settled there are as so many torches, whose splendour discovers itself afar from a very elevated place, which attract all the world to the love of the holy repose which they enjoy, and guaranty from shipwreck and darkness all who cast eyes upon them and consider their holy dwelling. Go then to see them, study their wisdom, seek their conversation, throw yourselves at their feet to embrace them; being certain that it is a thing more glorious to touch feet so venerable and holy, than to touch the head of others. It is going from earth to heaven, to enter the monastery of a holy man. You see not there the disorders which afflict you at home. This assembly is wholly exempt. Silence and repose reign profoundly there. The two words *mine* and *thine*, are entirely banished therefrom. If you dwell there only a day or two, you will feel yourself filled with extreme pleasure. As soon as day begins to dawn, or rather before it is day, and from the time the cock crows, the Superior, entering the place where the solitaries sleep, awakens all by gently knocking with the foot. In those places they never undress for sleep; it would be against the rules. As soon as they have risen, they intone with much sweetness and harmony the

hymns and songs of the prophets. No lute, nor any other instrument whatsoever, yields a sound so delightful and a melody so agreeable, as that which is heard in the deserts when those holy ones are chanting there in profound tranquillity. Their songs also are proportioned to the sentiments of piety which animate them, and are filled with the extreme love which they bear towards God. They borrow from David divine songs, which make to flow from their eyes many living springs of tears, as they chant with angels, and say in the company of those pure spirits, *Praise God in the highest!* It is a wonderful thing to see them pass all the night in this divine exercise, whilst we, extended on our beds, are revolving in our minds an infinity of illusions. The day come, they repose a little; and that which is to us the commencement of our labours, is with them the time appointed for a little rest which they are obliged to take. Afterwards when matins are over, and they have recited their hymns, they employ themselves at once in reading the holy scriptures. Some among them have learnt to write [copy] books. Each has an appointed abode; and all observe silence, while no one is occupied with trifles. After that they have prayers at different hours, the third, sixth, ninth, and vespers; thus dividing the day into four parts, which they employ in different devotions. The care of furnishing the table, and inquietude arising from things of sense never occupy them. After their repast, they take a little repose, and then again betake themselves to prayer. They watch during the night as true children of the light; and unlike worldly persons, who after sleeping during the day, are overpowered with sleep, these saints are always free and tranquil, and chant hymns without inconvenience, though remaining fasting until evening. Towards the end of the day, the former are obliged to go to the bath for refreshment; instead of which the latter merely quit their work to place themselves at table. Some are served with bread and salt, others with oil, and the most infirm eat a little of herbs and vegetables. Then, after sitting a while, and having ended their repast by hymns, they repose on beds made for repose only, not for pleasure. There, there is neither dread of magistrates, nor the pride of imperious masters, nor fear of servants, nor trouble with women, nor confused noise of small children, nor gold nor silver, nor change of raiment, nor coffers to guard, nor anything of the sort; but all there is full of prayers, hymns, and spiritual perfumes, and there is nothing carnal nor terrestrial."

We conclude with a single specimen of interpretation from the seventh homily against the Anomoeans, a heretical sect, who held that the Son was in every respect unlike the

Father.* They were a division of the Arian party, and were called also from their leaders, Eunomians and Acacians. They had objected to Chrysostom, that the answer of Jesus to the mother of Zebedee's sons was inconsistent with the Catholic doctrine. The homilist replies :—

“The sense is, that neither Jesus Christ, nor the Father himself, gives the first place in the kingdom of heaven by absolute will, but according to good works and sufferings on behalf of the truth. . . . What would he who distributes the prizes in the public games, answer to a mother who should come to ask him to give the two prizes to her two sons? It does not belong to me, he would say, to give them, I can only distribute them to those who will obtain the victory. . . . If it were that Jesus Christ recompensed irrespectively of merit, all men would be saved, and would enjoy an equal degree of glory; for he created them all, and he takes care of all. But Paul does not permit us to doubt, that there are in heaven various degrees of honour, when he says, There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.”†

* κατὰ πάντα ἀνόμοιος τῷ Πατρί.

† With all our respect for Chrysostom in his character of interpreter, and all our unwillingness for the parting word to be one of dissent, we cannot help saying that he seems to have missed the aim of the passage quoted, 1 Cor. xv. 41. Paul is not there comparing different individual partakers of the resurrection, but the two different states of the body, before and after the resurrection, which different states are common to all of whom he speaks.

C. W., M. A.

A HOMILY

ON

The Spiritual Universe:—

THE FOES OF THE GOOD.

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”—Ephe. vi. 11-12.

THAT there is a *spiritual universe* I have endeavoured to show by certain considerations, which make the proposition a truth of unquestionable character and deep significance to me. I have intimated, that there are three great departments of this spirit-realm—the human, the super-human, and the divine. One branch of the *super-human*, namely, that of holy ministering angels, occupied our attention in the preceding homily; and to the other branch of this vast department of spiritual being, that of fallen angels, let us now turn our earnest thoughts.

The passage we have selected, implies a few points in relation to these beings, under one of which we may group, perhaps, most of the cardinal information which either reason suggests, or the Bible declares, on the subject.

I. THAT THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE IN THE EXISTENCE OF SUPER-HUMAN BEINGS, WHOSE CHARACTERS ARE RADICALLY EVIL. The apostle here assumes the fact of evil beings who have “not flesh and blood,” and which he calls “spiritual

wickedness in high places,"* and takes it for granted that the Ephesians would not question, but readily accept, the point. The language shows, that he and they regarded the existence of these evil spirits as a *settled* article in their creed; and from this we conclude, that there must be sufficient evidence, somewhere, to carry conviction of the fact.

In endeavouring to develope some portion of the evidence, I shall offer three observations:—

First: *That there is nothing, a priori, improbable in the supposition of their existence.* Assuming, what we have in a preceding homily endeavoured to make good, that there are myriads of rational moral beings, existing apart from "flesh and blood," in a well-nigh endless gradation of power, position, and influence, in the creation, I cannot see the shadow of an improbability in the supposition that some of them may have lost their "first love," renounced their allegiance to the throne of the *absolute good*, and become rebels against the supreme majesty of the universe. All, among the teeming myriads, were created moral agents. However vastly they differed in make, faculty, and function;—in the elements of moral freedom they were one. Each was made to act, not from a blind impulse from within, nor from a resistless pressure from without, but from an *intelligent motive*. And is not an intelligent motive evermore the result of thought—the creation of thought? And thought is ever *free*. Moral mind, everywhere, is the sovereign of its own thought; and being this, is ever free to stand or fall. It can select its own themes for musing, its own objects to love; it can map out its own pathway and choose its own steps. Were this not so, there would be no such thing as virtue in God's creation; for where there is not the *capa-*

* "πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις."—This passage admits of different translations, and has received them from Biblical scholars. The paraphrase of Doddridge evidently gives the sense of the apostle: "Wicked spirits in the heavenly, or aerial, regions."

bility of sinning, how can there be praiseworthiness in obeying? The *power* to sin is a blessing—one of the choicest gifts of God to his creatures; the *disposition* to sin is itself a crime and a curse. He gives moral minds the power to sin, that they may claim the merit and enjoy the glory of obedience.

If all are created with this capacity, Is there anything improbable in the idea, that some amongst the “numbers without number” did, in the plenitude of their freedom, use their power wrongly? Is it improbable, that some of the “trees of righteousness,” planted in the spiritual paradises of the creation, grew fruitless and withered? Is it improbable, that one sheep out of every hundred in the countless folds, should go astray and be lost? I confess that I see rather the likelihood of such an event than the reverse.

Secondly : *There is something in human experience that would suggest the probability of their existence.* Men, from remotest times, have come to believe in their existence. The doctrine of *dualism*, or the idea that there are two original existences in the universe—the one producing and nurturing the evil, and the other creating and fostering the good, seems to have permeated the spirit of olden times. “The ancient eastern nations, in general, admitted the existence of certain evil spirits, clothed in a vehicle of grosser matter; and in subduing and counteracting these, they placed a great part of the efficacy of their religious incantations.”* Egypt, Persia, Chaldea, and the ancient Celts, under various modifications, held the same idea. Some of the Grecian philosophers, too, propounded the doctrine. Cudworth, tells us that Empedocles “acknowledged demons, or angels; declaring that some of these fell from heaven and were since prosecuted by a divine Nemesis.”† From the testimony of

* Enfield's History of Philosophy, p. 20.

† Cudworth's Intellectual System, 1 vol., p. 46.

travellers and missionaries, we learn that modern heathendom, in many, if not in most, of its districts, has a deep and terrible faith in the existence of evil spirits of superhuman cast. "Some of them"—the heathen—says Mr. Scott, "worship the devil, and not God, and assign as their reason for doing so, that God is good and will not injure them, and will even confer benefits on them without solicitation or worship; but that as the devil is malignant, it is necessary to propitiate him by their sacrifices."* Now, I do not say that this belief, which has been, and still is, so common to humanity, is itself a conclusive argument for the fact of their existence; but I do aver, that it shows there is a something in the *general experience* of mankind to suggest the likelihood of their being.

Thirdly: *There are statements in the Bible, that demonstrate the existence of such beings.* It is a Biblical question; and assuming the *divinity* of the scriptures, their authority on the subject is decisive and ultimate. Did the doctrine appear, *a priori*, improbable to us; and was there nothing in human experience to suggest its likelihood—still, if the Bible, by a fair and philosophic interpretation of its language, taught it, we are bound to abide by its pronouncement. We, therefore, turn away from all metaphysical conjecturings and historical suggestions which, as we have seen, favor the doctrine, to hear what *the Oracle* declares. Now, although we are far enough from believing that the Old Testament has nothing very decisive in favor of the belief; still, inasmuch as we are bound to admit that its references to *evil angels*, sometimes, mean not beings evil in their *character*, but evil only in their *mission*; and as we have no account in the scriptures of such beings until after the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, where the doctrine was one of the religious beliefs of the natives; and as the New Testament is confessedly the most complete and final revelation of the divine will, we are content to abide by its decision on the point. And it literally

* See Congregational Lecture, by Walter Scott. p. 17.

abounds with this doctrine.* The men to whom Jesus spoke, with the exception of the Sadducees, who believed neither in the resurrection, nor in angels good or bad, were all evidently strong and practical believers in the existence of evil spirits. Whether they derived their belief from Chaldea, where the dualistic theory prevailed, or from prophetic inspiration, it matters not to our argument; it is clear that Christ, instead of giving them the shadow of a reason to question the validity of their belief upon this point, recognized and established its truth by the most significant acts and unquestionable expressions. He gave his hearers to understand that *evil spirits*, not only existed in the universe, but haunted the habitations of men, possessed the wicked here, and would be their tormenting companions in the terrible hereafter. The apostles, too, were possessed of the doctrine, and taught it both in their speeches and letters. In short, if the New Testament teaches me anything with certainty, it teaches me that there are superhuman spirits in the universe, whose characters are dreadfully depraved—who have lost all generous interest in the creation, all sympathy with their Maker; whose motives are totally corrupt, whose impulses are malignant and impious; whose inspiration is hostility to God, and whose life and energies are expended in incessant battling against the moral order and well-being of the holy universe,—

“Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.”

From this passage we infer—

II. THAT THOSE BEINGS COMPREHEND A LARGE VARIETY OF CLASSES. “PRINCIPALITIES,” “POWERS,” “RULERS.” The

* Matt. xii. 28, 29; xiii. 38, 39; xxv. 41-46. Luke xi. 21, 22; xxii. 31. John viii. 44; xii. 31; xiii. 2, 27, 39; xvi. 8, 11. Acts v. 3; xiii. 10; xxvi. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 5. 2 Cor. ii. 11; iv. 4. Ephe. ii. 2. Col. i. 13. 2 Peter ii. 4. James ii. 19. 1 John iii. 8. Rev. ii. 10, 24; xii. 7, 10, 13, 15, 17; xx. 2, 10. We earnestly recommend our readers to search these and the cognate passages critically.

words suggest what analogy and other portions of scripture seem to teach, that these classes exist in a two-fold order—the order of *gradation*, and the order of *government*.

First: *The order of gradation.* We have seen that degrees exist amongst the *holy* angels. They rise class above class in approximation to the highest intellect, rectitude and blessedness. In like manner it is suggested that these evil ones sink from grade to grade, to the lowest. They differ, as all beings differ, in constitutional make. Some possess a greater variety of faculty, and a higher amount of power than others. They differ, too, in degrees of sin. All, probably, are not *equally* depraved. Like unconverted men, whilst *all* are corrupt, the corruption of some is almost venial and innocent compared with that of others. Hell has its degrees as well as heaven and earth.

Secondly: *The order of government.* “Principalities,” and “rulers.” Do not these words give the idea of government? Do we not read, moreover, of the “kingdom of darkness,” and of *one* who seems to be the autocratic head of all, denominated the “prince of the power of the air”? All this assuredly gives the idea of government amongst them.

“Devil with devil damn’d firm concord holds.”

Concord indeed! Of what concord does the prince of poets sing? Not the concord of mutual sympathy, and love for each other. For amongst such beings there can be nothing but those mutual jealousies, envies, reproaches, and antipathies, which imply an eternal war of soul with soul. It is a concord of rule—the rule of *force* and *fraud*. The concord of one class ruling the other—the stronger keeping the weaker in absolute subjection—the more subtil and sagacious rendering the more obtuse and less informed, the dupes of their influence. It is the concord of a nation of serfs under the terrific reign of a despot, of a population of slaves under the fiery inspection of their armed tyrant; it is the con-

cord of insurgent provinces hating each other, but mechanically leagued together against the righteous authorities of the state.

Various are the names given to the head of this mighty confederation of evil spirits. But each name is significant. He is called the "serpent," to indicate the craftiness of his intellect, and the virus of his heart. He is called "satan," to indicate his opposition to God and the universe. He is called "apollyon," indicating his work as the destroyer of all good—one who rifles mind of its virtue, robs the universe of its beauty, and man of his blessedness. He is called the "devil," the "accuser" or "slanderer," "beelzebub," the "prince of devils," the "God of this world";—words indicating the vastness of his sublunary influence. Who can estimate the power of this moral tyrant—this ringleader of evil forces in the universe—this head of all spiritual wickednesses in high places? His energies, perhaps, are equal to the combined energies of all the various grades of evil spirits. He can coerce the strongest, and delude the wisest. All are his angels—his bond slaves. If, in the history of men, who are "all made of one blood," there is found at times some one man who, like Mahomet, can delude a whole country with its population for centuries; or like Cæsar, can coerce a world; there is, surely, no improbability in the belief that in a region of beings, all of whom are constitutionally different, there may be found *one* of sufficient *craft* to deceive, and sufficient *force* to coerce the whole.

We infer—

III. THAT THESE BEINGS EXERCISE A TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE UPON THE CHARACTER AND DESTINY OF MANKIND. They are here called "the rulers of the darkness of this world." They have not merely a power over each other, but also a power over the population of this world. "They are the rulers of the darkness of this world."

This implies, *that there is "darkness in the world."* There is the gloom of the intellect; we read of the "understand-

ing being darkened." Ignorance, like the sable shadows of night, hides the sun and veils creation from our view. There is the gloom of the heart. Corrupt dispositions and emotions surround it like an atmosphere of densest vapour, through which the beams of moral light struggle to pass in vain. It is the "pure in heart" alone that can see God. There is the gloom of conscience; the sense of guilt, like a "thick cloud," covers the heavens, and is charged with threatening tempests. There is the gloom of life; extinguished hopes, frustrated purposes, bereaved friendships, violated rights, physical ills, and the terrible shadows of death flung athwart our path, envelope most men in thickest gloom at times. Yes, yes, despite of your civilization, and your educational, and religious, appliances, without figure, the world is yet "a dark place"; there is a "veil over all nations"; darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people; "the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

Now, it is amidst the *darkness* that these spirits reign and revel. They cannot live in light. The darker the region the greater their power. Theirs is "the kingdom of darkness." Where do they reign? Where ignorance spreads her gloom: in the cold region of Atheism, where the mental energies are benumbed, and in the tropic realm of superstition, where the soul is stirred into an agony of fear, and is scared with the horrid forms of its own creations. Amidst the gloomy recesses of ignorance they rear their throne; through the districts of intellectual darkness they prowl about in search of their prey. They reign where depravity beclouds the heart, wherever passion is stronger than principle, the senses than the soul, the love of the world than the love of God;—whether that be amidst the districts of heathenism or civilized life, in the marts of business, the temples of devotion, or the flowery scenes of gaiety and pleasure. They enshrine themselves amidst the benighted chambers of an impure imagination, they haunt the atmosphere of pollution, impregnate it with their spirit, causing it to stimu-

late the unrighteous zeal of the selfish, to fire the passions of the carnal, and to swell the vanity of the ambitious and the proud. They reign where sorrow and suffering darken all. They delight in misery. The wretchedness of the indigent, the sighs of the distressed, the groans of the oppressed, and the agonies of the dying, gratify their malignant natures.

Is all this mere imagination—the fantastic vision of superstitious natures? Or is there rational evidence that these evil spirits do exert an influence upon the character and destinies of mankind? I am inclined to believe, that there is a most conclusive amount of evidence to sustain the fact of satanic mundane influence. Without attempting fully to develop this evidence, which would require far greater space than we have at our command, we may suggest—

First: *Whether, on the assumption of their existence, it is not likely that they would desire to exert this influence?* Do not sinful principles, like virtuous ones, stimulate their possessors to seek their propagation? Does not falsehood seek to deceive—ambition struggle for conquests—selfishness seek abettors and helps? It is natural to expect, what experience shows to be the fact, that he who yields to a temptation, will feel the impulse of a tempter rising with his fall. Eve, no sooner surrenders to the tempter, than she grasps the seductive wand and wields it with effect.

We may suggest—

Secondly: *Whether the moral state of our world does not indicate it?* In the material world, I find unbroken harmony; nature proceeds in her march without any deviation; element co-operates with element, and force with force. In the animal world, each creature is in harmony with itself; it beams with the reflected radiance of benignant nature, and bounds in the blessedness of its own harmonious instincts. But enter the human mind: it is a world of confusion. Faculty is battling with faculty, and feeling with feeling. Why this difference? Physical nature is harmonious, because *one* master spirit is over it; and may

it not be that the moral system of humanity is in confusion, because *two* classes of foreign spirits are acting upon it—the good and the evil, and struggling for the mastery? This is my solution at any rate.

We suggest—

Thirdly: *Whether, on the supposition that the Bible is the word of God, it is possible to deny it?* The Bible tells us of various persons with whom the evil spirit came in direct contact. Our first parents, David, Joshua the high priest, Judas, Annanias and Sapphira, and Jesus himself in the wilderness. It tells us, that the evil spirit is busy in sowing tares amongst the wheat, in blinding the eyes of men; that like a roaring lion, he goes about seeking whom he may devour; that he worketh in the children of disobedience. It warns us against his “wiles” and “devices,” and urges us to “resist” him. Indeed, it is so full of the doctrine, that these evil spirits exert¹ an influence upon the character and destiny of mankind, that you must deny its divinity, to deny the fact.

The question, *how* these spirits influence men, can be answered only by those who know all their avenues of access to us. At how many points, does man touch man! Physically, he imparts a portion of his vital energy and disease; mentally, he gives a turn to the intellect and shapes to the thoughts of others; morally, he infects them with the spirit of his heart. Man has, confessedly, a wonderful influence over the members of his race. In history, do we not often find a solitary life vibrating through future generations? It is in no *one* way that men impart their influence. As well absent as present, by silence as speech, by rest as action, they affect their fellows. There radiates from us all a mysterious something, which cannot fail to touch our kind at every point. Who can tell, moreover, the other influences than human to which we are subject? All that come within the sphere of my senses, the sweep of my fancy, the reach of my intellect, affect me. One trivial circumstance may originate a train of thought, a current of

feeling, a series of actions, that shall out-live the stars. The slightest alteration in the proportion of the component parts of the atmospheric air, may so act upon the brain as to produce mental results of the most lasting and momentous kind. There is not a breath that sweeps over us, however soft, that does not wake some ripple on the current of our being. Shall I, therefore, doubt the *fact* of the influence of these evil spirits because I understand not the mode? As soon may I doubt the fact of all influence.

But, it may be asked, are not these spirits represented as confined in "chains of darkness"; and if so, how can they exert this influence? We believe that they are in chains, —but the chains are not material. No material chain can manacle spirit. Prejudices, lusts, and habits, are their chains; and whilst these chains restrict their moral freedom they do not prevent their activity or their influence. Every sinner is a self-bound captive, though he may be allowed the use of his faculties, and have license to roam through the universe. See that miser. He seems free. He is confined within no prison walls; he walks the fields at pleasure, and travels, perhaps, through foreign countries, yet he is enchained. "His soul can neither fly nor go." Covetousness binds his faculties and his will, as with adamant. It is so with those evil spirits; they may have full liberty of changing their position, they may pass from continent to continent, and from world to world, and yet be in "chains of darkness,"—the slaves of their own malignant dispositions and inveterate habits of sin.

We infer from this passage :—

IV. THAT AGAINST THE INFLUENCE OF THESE EVIL SPIRITS IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY MAN EARNESTLY TO CONTEND. "Put on the whole armour of God," &c. The apostle, in urging the obligation, does two things in the context :—

(1.) *He indicates the instrumentality by which resistance is to be offered.* The moral "armour" is here presented under the form of the panoply of ancient warfare. Here is "truth,"

which, like the girdle of the ancient warrior, must brace up the energies and bind every other part of the armour together. Here is "righteousness," compared to the breast-plate, which protected the body from neck to thigh. Here is the "preparation of the gospel of peace," which, like the "shoe" of the ancient warrior, enables him both to stand firm on the ground against his foe, and fits him to pursue his march. Here is "faith," which, like the ancient shield, defends every part, parries the blow and quenches the fiery darts. Here is "salvation,"—the hope of it—which, like the "helmet," guards the head—the most vital part. Here is the "word of God," which, like the ancient sword, is to do execution upon the foe; and here is prayer, "all prayer"—prayer at all time and for all blessings, which will insure the victory.

(2.) *He indicates in the context the energy with which this resistance is to be offered.* We must "wrestle." This is a gymnastic, rather than a military, metaphor. It is not the less expressive here on that account. The allusion is to one of the Grecian games, which required the concentration of skill and strength;—in the action, every power is brought into play, and the spirit beats high with enthusiasm.

Now, there are a few general truths which naturally arise out of our remarks and which, in conclusion, I will briefly notice :—

First: *The fallibility of the holiest creatures.* Were these wicked spirits always wicked? Is wickedness their normal condition? Did the Holy Creator make them to hate himself, to rebel against his government, and injure His creation? Were evil principles wrought by Him into the texture of their nature? In the first morning of their being did they come forth from Him charged with the seeds of evil? Such a supposition is incompatible with our fundamental notions of a God, as well as contrary to the whole tenor of the scriptures on the question. The first estate of these high intelligences was that of immaculate holiness. The morning

of their youth they spent under the radiant smiles of the Infinite in thorough sympathy with the divine, and in sweetest concert with the holy universe.

“High in the midst of all the throng,
Satan a tall archangel sat.”

Does not the fact, therefore, that they are now corrupt, show the *fallibility* of the holiest creatures? When I aver that the holiest creatures are fallible, I do not mean that they have in them a *disposition* to wrong: this, in *itself* would be a sin. Nor do I mean to intimate that there is much probability of the holiest creatures sinking into sin. Indeed I believe that there is a moral certainty that the sainted men who have been raised to the blessedness of heaven will never fall again; and that, as a rule, the longer a being continues in holiness, the less and less probable it becomes that his state will ever change. But I mean that every creature, however great and holy, has the *susceptibility* to be influenced to the wrong. In sooth, without this susceptibility, what is virtue in a creature, but a misnomer? Where there is no susceptibility of feeling a temptation, can there be any virtue in withstanding it? Nay, can there be temptation at all? Temptation implies the susceptibility. Had Christ himself not possessed it, would His temptation have had any meaning? Christians, be on your guard; remember, that those *evil spirits* once

“Sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial; blotted out and ras’d
By their rebellion, from the books of life.”

Secondly: *The independent force of moral mind.* On the supposition that the first state of the spiritual universe was that of order and holiness, how great must have been the force of those minds who broke off at first! They went against all *within*; their intuitions, their habits of thought and their tendencies, opposed them. They went against all *without*; all the beings, circumstances, scenes, and influences

that surrounded the *first* sinners, were against the rebellious act. There could not have been, as now in our world, either a single propensity within, or a single circumstance without, to impel to transgression. All things flowed like a majestic tide in favor of holiness. What *force*, therefore, must have been in the will of these creatures to rise up against all this, to turn back the waves that bore them on, to snap the mighty chain of influence that bound them to rectitude, and plunge into a dark world of their own creation—

“As far removed from God and light of heaven,
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.
Oh, how unlike the place from whence they fell.”

Who does not stand aghast at this display of moral force? What stronger proof can there be of the freedom of action, with which the Creator has endowed the subjects of His moral government? Had all rational spirits continued, without one exception, to pursue the course of rectitude in which they started at the commencement of their history, there might have been some plausibility in objections raised against the *free agency* of spirit. The unbroken monotony of action might have been regarded as indicating the lack of power to act contrary to the first impulses received. But with such a fact as the fall of these spirits before us, the idea is too shadowy to have a moment's entertainment.

This force belongs to us all: for the mind that has not the *native* energy of will to rise against all within and without, is not in the truest sense moral. The service which the Creator requires from responsible beings, is not a service without the will, or against the will, but *by* the will. What Jesus said to his disciples of old, when some forsook Him, the Great Ruler of the universe virtually said to those of the heavenly hierarchy who remained faithful after the fall of their illustrious compeers:—“Will ye also go away?”—Will ye leave these thrones, surrender these harps, withdraw from these glories, and renounce your allegiance to *me*? I leave it to your choice, for I have made you free.

Thirdly : *The righteous sphere of battle.* The advocates of war, not unfrequently, adduce the warlike propensities of man as an argument for its rectitude. Grant, that man has these propensities, and grant, also, that they are not the effects of depravity, but the implantations of his Maker. Is there not an abundance of scope for them, beside the field of "flesh and blood," the slaughter and carnage of the race? Human life is the product of God, and we have to do battle, not with the works of God, but with "the works of the devil." Are you of those who wish their countrymen to believe that they are very heroic ;—whose mouth is full of great swelling words of pugnacious bravery? You need not go to Sebastopol for enemies. Open your eyes, and like the old prophet's servant, you will see "horses and chariots of fire round about" you. Come with me and I will point you to enemies enough to exhaust all your belligerent tendencies, and challenge all your courage. I point you to that pestilence which is generating in your streets and alleys ;—battle with that, and you will save hundreds and thousands from an untimely grave. I point you to that intemperance, which desolates the homes, brutalizes the manners, abbreviates the life, withers the intellect, and damns the soul, of thousands around you ;—battle with that. I point you to that daily-increasing pauperism, under whose frigid and darkening shadows thousands of your countrymen are sighing out a miserable existence ;—battle with that. I point you to that spiritual ignorance which darkens the firmament of humanity and wraps every great moral question in gloom, so that the world's leaders stumble as in the night ;—battle with that. I point you, in one word, to the corrupt laws, corrupt institutions, corrupt religions, corrupt principles, corrupt habits, of mankind, and I ask you to battle with them. Here is scope for your boasted valor—a field for a fair fight, my pugnacious brother. To battle with these enemies, is to battle with the "principalities and powers of darkness"—the common foes of your race. This is the only battle honourable to your nature. To kill men

is a victory which the wild beast can achieve as well as you. But to grapple with the evils which afflict our kind is the exclusive prerogative and the highest glory of a rational being. He who fights thus—fights under the broad and sunny flag of heaven, will win the crown of life, and have the “well-done” of God, and the blessing of millions, sounding as sweetest music for ever in his soul.

Fourthly: *The worth of Christianity.* How are we to contend with these spiritual foes? Not by superstitious incantations, not by sacerdotal offices, not by rites and penances, not by dead creeds, or formal worship; but by the word of God. Christianity furnishes us with the necessary panoply, directs us how to use it, and inspires us in the work. It teaches our “hands to war and our fingers to fight.” The apostle in the context shows, that its “truth” is to be the girdle; its “righteousness” the breast-plate; its gospel, or good news, the sandals; its “faith” the shield; its “salvation” the helmet; its “word” the sword. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and it is only through His system and spirit that we can hope for any success in this engagement. Thank God for Christianity!

Let us, then, put on the whole armour and “wrestle” hard. Our foes are numerous, crafty, and strong; they beset our path—they haunt the walks of life—they are in the quiet chamber, and the busy shop; and their “fiery darts” fall thickly upon us. Shall we be indifferent? Shall we sleep in our tents, when the clangor of the battle is around us and multitudes fall at our feet? There is a danger of being conquered; thousands fall victims every day; they receive the mortal wound and are lost. Life is an arena; if we win the victory, we are made for ever; if we lose, we are irremediably lost. Let us “put on the whole armour of God,” and “wrestle” earnestly, and without intermission, till the battle is fully won.

The Pulpit in the Family.

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON THE GRADUAL, BUT EFFECTUAL, OPERATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH IN THE WORLD.

PART II.—*Continued from p. 93.*

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”—Matt. xiii. 33.

WE proposed to look at this text under two leading aspects—the *individual* and the *social*. We have dismissed the first; we approach the second. The words find their most legitimate application in the history of Christianity in the world, and hence we may gather the most striking illustrations. It is when we conceive of that divine cause, starting from a humble and an obscure part of the civilized globe, and by the meanest instrumentalities, gradually spreading a wider influence over human minds; planting deep within the heart the expansive principles of benevolence, and charity, and zeal for God; going on, step by step, from man individual, to man social, man collective; taking hold of existing relationships, and through these, sending on its life-giving influences to those beyond; fitting itself, for a time, to the capacities and circumstances of men, but gradually remoulding and elevating both; imperceptibly going down to the very basis of the social system; giving a new character and bearing to the principles of political economy; until, having climbed the lofty heights of imperial power, the emblem of earth's mightiest sovereignty sat upon a Christian monarch's brow:—it is in sketching a career, so full of wonder and glorious achievement, we feel the

language of the text has a meaning,—a meaning written in deep and indellible facts,—a meaning which is only brought fully home to the mind, in the light which history sheds upon the footsteps of our Immanuel in the world.

The three points of analogy, already traced as regards the individual, will be found to obtain yet more fully in general society.

I. HIDDENNESS. Truly the gospel leaven was hidden in the mass of humanity, when the Divine Master first appeared in Judea, and for three years went about teaching the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. There was nothing ostensibly potent in that band of men who early became the adherents of our Saviour. There was nothing threatening in the doctrines which they preached. They spoke of one Jesus, whom wicked men crucified, and in this crucified one they called upon men everywhere to believe. But in doing this they were counted fools, their names were cast out as evil, and themselves regarded as the filth and off-scouring of all things. And on persisting in this course of reputed folly, the rage and malice of imperial tyranny were added to the frowns and contempt of a proud philosophy. Yet, beneath all this, there was a latent action—an under current, which, in the course of a few years, turned the world upside down. Learning and ingenuity have employed themselves in seeking to account for this mighty revolution on the ground of secondary causes, by the operation of natural laws and principles; but there is a palpable inadequacy in the whole, to account for those stupendous achievements which adorn the annals of the Christian Church. Nothing but the recognition of the operation of a divine power, beneath and above all the visible appliances of Christianity, can solve the amazing problem; a spiritual agency, preceding and succeeding the first heralds of the cross; proving by the very weakness of the instruments that the power was of God, and that the doctrine of Christ crucified, though to the Jew a stumbling block, and

to the Greek foolishness, was destined to fill our dark and desolate world with light, and purity, and love.

II. ASSIMILATIVENESS. To trace the process of moral and spiritual Assimilation which the gospel has secretly, but unceasingly, urged among the communities of earth, is a work of richest interest and profit to the Intelligent Christian. The order of procedure pursued in the regeneration of a people is identical with that pursued in the renewal of an individual. That which is required in man, is a change; not merely in the outward walk—a superficial amendment of the visible life, but a change in the central parts of our moral nature,—at the place of command and presiding authority, and where the mainspring of every deed and every movement lies. And so it must be in a community. To attack, and destroy, and rebuild, the material framework, the mere outposts of society, is a small matter in seeking to elevate a people. All this may be done, and that which really constitutes national life and character may be untouched, or more probably, fatally injured. And hence the follies and failures of those who have, from age to age, started up and called themselves reformers; vainly seeking to give man purity and happiness, by modifying the mere conventionalisms of life. But all such attempts are false to reason and experience. It is to adopt an inverted order of action. To seek effectually man's advancement in the scale of well-being, we must rectify the movements of his unseen nature; we must give him that, without which all the mere externalisms of life are lost upon him; we must change his principles, and capacities, and dispositions, or all our circumstantial changes are utterly vain. The mere *mechanical* arrangements of social and political life are trivial when compared with the moral and religious elements which must ever give character and effect to all the parts of social organization. The primary object, therefore, of all reforms should be, to find, and purify, the sources of moral influence, to regulate the moral mechanism

of a civil constitution ;—but this can never be done by any wholesale measures, but by enlightening and reforming *individual* minds. Such has been the order of the gospel. When first offered to the Pagan world, it did not go directly and formally to quarrel with legislative functions, how corrupt and despotic soever. For a time, it could afford to pass these by, not with approval, but in silence. Its mission was to preach repentance and faith,—to announce salvation ; but this was the most immediate and effectual course to uproot and destroy evil from every section of the community. Christianity poured a new current of influence through all existent relationships, by a method peculiarly its own. By giving men new *hearts*, it gave them new *lives*. Its converts became devoted witnesses for the truth,—its living expositions ; principles were embodied in action ; doctrines and precepts were developed in the life ; and thus, through the ordinary intercourse of man with man, the dominion of the truth was widened, and the knowledge of the glory of God was extended, in the world. Christianity could find entrance everywhere, precisely because it was the religion of God's sovereignty in the heart, and excluded every political element. The gospel has approached and elevated man under every form of government ; passing by, for a time, the institutions of a state, as of secondary moment, and going directly to the soul. The Holy Ghost has carried home the truth to individual consciences, assured of pardon and peace, and implanted the principles of the divine life. But, though the work of reform has begun in the individual soul, it has not stopped there. When the gospel has re-made man, man has re-made institutions ; and thus, through the higher powers of human nature,—the moral capacities of the soul, Christianity has extended its sanctifying energy through the more subordinate departments of life. It has given character and stability to commerce ; raised and purified the tone of social sentiment and feeling ; moulded and directed public morals ; it has lived and ruled

in legislative counsels; given sanctity and efficiency to law; and by inweaving the principles of divine truth with the whole texture of society, it has renovated and exalted the whole.

But in acknowledging these more tangible benefits which Christianity has conferred upon man in general, we are never to forget that it has yet higher and purer purposes. To soften down the asperities of society, to cast a kindlier aspect over its surface, and to infuse a nobler element into its constitution, are rather matters of *incident*, than of fixed and primary *design*. In seeking to attain the greater, Christianity has necessarily secured the less. National peace and happiness, truth and justice, the safety, honor, and welfare, of a people, are indissolubly linked with "religion and piety." Let evangelical principles live and rule in individual men; let Christ be enthroned in individual hearts; let domestic life come fully beneath the power of Bible truth; and the community, as a whole, will make progress in all that is holy and just and good. "Righteousness exalteth a nation." (Prov. xiv. 34.)

III. PROGRESSIVENESS. The text has a prophetic bearing. The end is not yet come. The consummation tarrieth. But our faith is pointed to a glorious future, when the truth shall have pervaded every nation, entered every family, and hallowed every heart. When "the kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Such is the purpose of Christian teaching, and such shall be the issue. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."

Appearances may be unfavorable. A vast and dreary expanse of unreclaimed territory rests beneath the death-fogs of ignorance, and cruelty, and superstition. The great mass of this world's population remains subject to the evil one, and to the eye of this world's wisdom, there may seem small promise of the hoped-for consummation. But we

walk by faith. Our Immanuel has gone up on high ; and into his hands are committed the reins of universal government. He sways a rebel world ;—"He utters his voice, the earth trembles." "He must reign till all enemies are put under him." The issue is not doubtful. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his words shall never pass away."

In the securing these high purposes, the church is not to anticipate any new order of things,—no new economy. The ways and means of the last eighteen hundred years are to be substantially the ways and means of the future. The servants of Christ are just now in danger of attaching too much faith to material instrumentalities. Many turn faint and hopeless, and send up an anxious and expectant look toward heaven for some overwhelming outburst of divine power. We have no notion that the world is to be converted by any such means. We need more faith in the means now in possession, and more skill and wisdom in employing them. The truth is revealed which is to make men free. The leaven is at work which is to leaven the world. Hiddenly, slowly, the process may go on ; but there is a resistless vitality in the agent. The subtle influences are penetrating the mass around, atom after atom is assimilated, and each adds to the power of the assimilating agent. Though there be not the dash and dazzle which some men long to see, there is life where they detect it not—quiet, but powerful, life. Truth's influences are streaming along all the channels of social existence. Let it be ours to imbed the gospel leaven in our own hearts, and in the hearts of others, and it will work its way to the outermost verge of our nature, and imbue the whole with the grace and power of the kingdom of heaven.

JOSEPH HYNE RYLANCE.

Paris.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological, remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

EIGHTEENTH SECTION.—*Matt.* vii. 28, 29; and viii. 1—4.

The World's Teacher and the World's Healer.

WE have gone through an examination of Christ's Sermon on the Mount; and than this, a richer field of spiritual, suggestive, and practical, thought comes not within the reach of mortals. There are seeds embedded in its fecundant soil, that shall one day cover every district and spot of the human world with flowers more beautiful, trees more stately, and fruits more delicious, than those that grew in the "garden" which "the Lord God planted" "eastward in Eden." Spiritual bread-corn for future generations is here. May the GREAT ONE enable us to sow this seed in our own hearts, as in well-tilled ground, and to scatter it broad-cast into the soul-fields of our age!

The verses which now come under our notice, present Christ to us in two of His most interesting relations to our world,—that of a Teacher and that of a Healer—relations which meet our profoundest wants. Humanity is ignorant, Christ is its Teacher; humanity is afflicted, Christ is its Healer.

THE WORLD'S TEACHER.

There are three incidents in the passage before us, which indicate the transcendent greatness of Christ as a Teacher—the impression he made upon his auditors; “they were astonished at his doctrine:” the reason which the Evangelist assigns for this impression; “for he taught them as one having authority:” and the numbers that accompanied him after the Sermon was over; “when he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.” These circumstances unite in giving us the idea, that as a Teacher He stands alone in unapproachable glory. “Never man spake like this man.”

All on whose ears His voice fell, felt this. It is said that “the common people heard Him gladly”;—the common people: not the religious rabble, or the poor morbid sentimentalists who are carried away with any vulgar declaimer who can excite their sensibility, but the unsophisticated millions without learning or religious dogmas, possessing the average amount of common sense—they “heard Him gladly.” There were a freshness and a force about His statements that touched their inmost nature and woke their slumbering souls. Under His discourses men seem to feel somewhat like the traveller, who, after sleeping the whole of his journey, opens his eyes a thousand miles away from home, and is astonished with the strange scenes amidst which he finds himself for the first time. The Sermons of Jesus wafted the minds of His hearers into a new world; new stars shone above them, the landscape was new; and the air, fresh and balmy, quickened the pulsations of their soul and gave them feelings they never had before. “They were astonished at his doctrine.”

But what gave this power to his Teaching? What were the distinguishing features of His Ministry? This question is of such practical moment, that we cannot do better than notice, briefly, a few out of many of Christ's Features, as a Teacher. We shall divide them into three classes:—

I. THOSE WHICH CANNOT BE IMITATED.

First: *His originality cannot be imitated*:—What he taught was not derived from books, traditions, or living men, but was the production of His own mind. The truth He taught was *in* Him, 'as rays are in the sun—as streams in the fountain. He was truth. Peradventure, indeed, you may find most of what He said wrapped up in the Jewish Scriptures. Be it so. He was, nevertheless, original. Originality does not necessarily mean novelty. A thousand minds may think the same thing, yet, each be strictly original in the thought. Moreover, was not the Old Testament itself derived from Him? Did He not speak by the Prophets? Was not His spirit in them? "He was in the world"—in its rising intuitions, and struggling intellects, long ages before His incarnation. He was the light "that lighteth every man." He illumined not only the Hebrew seers, but those ancient sages, whose philosophies, infidels would have us believe, were the fountains of His best ideas. Does the sun borrow from the ray? Then, did Jesus borrow from your Socrates, Plato, and Seneca? No, He borrowed not. He drew His Sermons from Himself. His ideas come forth from Him, wearing the impress of His own nature. Even the ideas that had been current in the world before, He made His own;—made new. He moulded them into new forms, breathed into them new life, and gave them new voice to startle the dormant faculties of mankind, and mould men into His own image. He cut a new channel for the world's thought, ever-widening and ever-deepening, and threw into it a tide of sentiments that shall one day flood the world with a new life.'

Secondly: *His miraculousness cannot be imitated*. Christ taught by wonderful works as well as words. His miracles, if they did not prove the truth of His doctrine, which we are disposed to admit, called attention to them, illustrated their meaning, and symbolized their spirit. Jesus made mute nature speak for Him. He unsealed the eye of the blind, healed the diseases of the afflicted, raised the bodies

of the dead, and hushed the storm, to adumbrate that spiritual light, health, life, and peace, which all His doctrines were designed and fitted to impart. This we cannot imitate. We cannot work miracles.

Thirdly : *His authority cannot be imitated.* "He spake as one having authority." There was nothing like the hesitating of doubt, or the consciousness of insufficiency, in His utterance. He knew that what He stated was true, and that He had the highest authority to proclaim it. Hence, He frequently prefaces the announcement of sentiments with the expression, "Verily, verily, I say unto you : " as if He had said, "I know that what I say is absolutely true, and have an undoubted right to proclaim it." Hence too, He challenged attention to, and demanded credence for, His doctrines, not on the testimony of others, nor on the ground of argument, but on His own authority. He places himself on an equality with the ABSOLUTE ONE. "He that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me." He states that His words would determine the future destiny of man. "The words that I speak unto you, they shall judge you in the last day." He did not utter His ideas as individual opinions, but as eternal principles ; His words came as laws rather than lessons. Such was His authority, that He had only to say at any time to any men, "follow me ;" and forthwith they would leave their all and follow Him. This is an attribute we cannot imitate.

II. THOSE WHICH MUST NOT BE IMITATED.

There appear to me three features in our Saviour's Ministry, which should never be imitated by other teachers.

First : *His positiveness.* Nearly the whole of His teaching is made up of positive assertion. He does not go into proof ; he seldom, if ever, condescends to argument. He is oracular ; He dictates, but seldom debates. This dogmatic mode was in Him an excellency. His doctrines were amongst those *first* principles of belief which lie beyond the reach of logic, and are so congruous with human con-

sciousness as to require no formal proof. He knew that the principles He enunciated were absolutely true,—true in themselves; and relatively true,—true to human nature. Why then should He deign to argue? It was for Him only to pronounce. Let no man attempt to imitate Christ in this respect; all, since the days of the apostles, are erring men; sin has clouded the divine page of first principles in their nature, and they have no reason to expect that their fellow men will receive doctrines on their *ipse dixit*. They must reason, not dogmatize. If they would have their opinions intelligently respected, they must seek by just and judicious argument to make them harmonize with the dictates of conscience, the laws of reason, and the word of God. The dogmatism of the pulpit is a repellent to genuine enquirers.

Secondly: *Self-assurance*. Christ, as a Teacher, had always boundless confidence in Himself. He never prefaced a discourse or a remark by an apology. There was nothing like the diffidence of self-insufficiency about Him. He always felt able to sound the depths of every thought, and to span every question. This self-assurance should not be imitated by any who are engaged in the holy work of Teaching. The apostles had it not; even Paul, at times, seemed crushed under a sense of his own insufficiency for a work so sublime in its nature, and so momentous in its issues. It is a sad thing to see, which you frequently may, self-sufficiency in this sacred office. Between the self-assurance of Christ and that of other preachers there is an infinite difference. They arise from opposite causes. Jesus had it because of the *perfection of His knowledge*. The whole realm of truth came within the sweep of His glance, and every object stood out in cloudless sunshine. He saw everything—everything distinctly, and in its true proportions and relations. He was the master of every theme He touched; the deepest things of God were familiar to His mind. But other teachers who have this self-assurance, have it because of their *ignorance*. The man who has the greatest dash of

this in his ministry, is the man who has seen the least of the wondrous and soul-overpowering field of truth. He has but just touched the margin, and seen an object here and there in the dim twilight of old dogmas, received from tradition or from books. The less thought, the more self-confidence in the pulpit; sometimes the paucity of thought and intelligence beget an impudence in the pulpit which the vulgar mistake for Christian boldness.

Thirdly: *His self-representation*. He was constantly speaking about Himself. He was the great subject of his own Teaching. Hence all he said was full of the *I*.—"I and my Father are one;" "I am the bread of life;" "I am the resurrection and the life;" "I am the good shepherd;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" "I say unto you," &c. His discourses are in fact full of the *I*. The reason of this is obvious: He had nothing greater to reveal; in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; He was the centre and circumference, the soul and substance, of all truth. Now, it is not for men to imitate this *egoism* in teaching. They have to keep self in the background. Their *I* in the pulpit is an offence and a sin;—they become great and powerful as they become self-oblivious. Their work is to bring Christ to the front; to catch the rays of His glory, and fling them on the souls of men. "I have determined to know nothing amongst men, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

These, then, are some of the features which must not be imitated. Let me now call your attention to the other class of features:—

III. THOSE WHICH SHOULD BE IMITATED.

First: *His naturalness as a Teacher*. I say natural, not in the sense of *coarseness*;—for all about His sentiments, expressions, and habits, as a Teacher, were exquisitely refined. An ethereal delicacy of feeling pervaded the whole of His life. Nor in the sense of *uncultivatedness* do I apply the word to Him. His intellectual and spiritual powers were

well trained. He had evidently devoted the leisure hours of his youthful life to the important work of self-culture. Somewhere, amid the soul-vivifying solitudes of nature, He had so studied the pages of *absolute* truth, that His spiritual faculties grew with His years. The mind of Jesus reached the full stature of perfect manhood, as did his body, gradually, by attending to the Divine laws of growth. But I mean that His Teaching was *natural* in the sense of *genuine simplicity*. How free from everything like *art* were the reasonings and the language of Christ! There was nothing of the technical scholar in the structure of His sentences, nor of the sanctimonious priest in His intercourse with His hearers. He did not formulate His thoughts by any logical rules, nor adorn them with any rhetorical ornaments. His thoughts were the rising intuitions of His own great nature, and He made the current and every-day language of His contemporaries the mirror to reflect them on the eye of others. His outward life was the faithful expression of His inward, and His inward life was ever in perfect agreement with truth, and sympathy with God. Every changing note of His voice was the ring of something new within, and every expression of His countenance was the gleam of some passing thought or feeling of His soul.

I refer His constant readiness to teach, to His naturalness. He was always ready;—He never offers an apology for unpreparedness. Never drawing His thoughts from books or memory, but from His own nature, He was never at a loss. He could speak to any class on any question, in any place at any time; and speaking, always make Himself felt; and this because He was not the creature of art, but the child of nature:—and unsophisticated nature, if interrogated, will never fail to respond; if trusted, will never disappoint.

I refer His variety as a Teacher to His naturalness. There was nothing monotonous in His Teaching. There was always something new. The same thing twice said by Him seemed different. Variety is a characteristic of nature, mo-

notony of art. Take the flower blooming in the landscape, and the flower painted on the canvass; or take the cedar towering in the forest, and the cedar cut down, carved, and polished, by the hand of art, to adorn some lordly mansion. The flower and the tree, abroad in the bosom of nature, are changing their forms and tints every hour, but in the cold sphere of art they remain from year to year almost the same. There seems to me as much difference between a teacher that is natural and the one that is artificial, as between the growing cedar and the polished pillar. The former is constantly varying,—new branches sprout forth and new tints appear; but the latter, from its constant sameness, becomes uninteresting. The want of naturalness has always been the sin and weakness of religious teachers. They have too generally lost their nature in their art, they have merged all the idiosyncracies of their manhood in their office. Their education, instead of strengthening and developing their nature and bringing out all its strong and characteristic points, has moulded them after some common conventional model, by which all are made to think in the same way, speak in the same voice and move in the same style. Hence, people sleep under the hollow monotony of the pulpit now-a-days.

Let nature, rightly trained to think, and permeated with the Godly spirit, speak in her own voice and key from the pulpit, and a spirit of hearing the gospel will once more inspire our population.

Secondly: *His suggestiveness as a Teacher.* Every sentence He uttered started some thought, or trains of thought, in His hearers. Hence the questions which were put to Him, not only at the end, but often in the midst of His discourses. There was more religious *thinking*, perhaps, in Judea during the three years of His ministry than had been there for centuries before. He put the wheels of religious thought, which had been all but motionless for ages, into a rapid movement, which has been perpetuated ever since, and which has borne humanity on to its present advanced stage of civilization,

knowledge, morality, and religion. His thoughts, like the breath of spring, swept over the mental world and quickened its dormant germs into life. This *suggestive* teaching is the highest kind of teaching,—the only teaching of any worth. He who crams the mind of others with his own ideas, however correct, does nothing to help humanity, equal to him who stimulates the mind to create ideas for itself—to *think*. No idea is of much service to me that has not passed through the process of generation in my own mind, and that I have not thus made my own. Jesus knew this, and His aim was to get men to think. The suggestiveness of His Teaching may be traced as much to the *manner* as to the *matter* of His discourses.

There was much in the *definiteness* of His manner to account for it. He generally appeared to have some *one* point at a time which He sought to fasten upon the attention of His hearers. His habit was to state some one principle, and then draw a parable to illustrate it; and by this means he would bring that principle so to act upon the mainspring of the soul, as to put the wheels of thought in action. In this respect His Teaching differs widely from the teaching of most of those who profess to be ministers of His gospel. They endeavour to press into every discourse the whole of their little system of theology; they must have what they designate the “doctrines of grace” in every sermon. “Doctrines of grace”! Narrow souls! Are not all the truths of the Bible, which lie thick as grass on each of its sacred pages, “Doctrines of grace”? Indeed, most of what you call the “doctrines of grace,” were seldom, if ever, mentioned by Christ. A sermon containing all the truths Jesus uttered in His discourse upon the mount would not be considered a “gospel sermon” by these theological censors. He who brings his own few favourite dogmas into every discourse, preaches not as Christ preached; and must have his ministry characterized more by the somnific than the suggestive.

I refer His suggestiveness as a Teacher, to His remarkable freedom from all that was formal and conventional in thought, expression, and manner. Everything He said was fresh with a new life; even truths that had become stale in human creeds, and hacknied on the lips of the world's pedagogues, bloomed with new life as they flowed from Him.

Thirdly: *His Catholicity as a Teacher.* It is true that the particular sphere of His ministry was Judea, that the class of men He generally addressed were Jews, and that some of the forms and illustrations of His doctrines were specially suited to the Hebrew race. But His Teaching, notwithstanding, was world-wide in its intent and adaptation. He spoke not mainly to a class, but to the race. His ministry was a ministry for humanity. He spoke to the Jew that, which in its spiritual relation, was equally applicable to the Gentile; to His contemporaries, that which was of equal fitness and moment to all generations of coming times up to the last hour of the world's probation. His truths were for the general intellect and conscience of humanity, and His merciful provisions for its common aspirations and wants. He was the first Teacher that ever founded a school for the world. Even the broad-minded Plato had written over the door of his school, "Let none but geometricians enter here." His was a school for a small class; but Christ has written, as it were in letters of light, over the entrance to His great school, "Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c.

(*To be continued.*)

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*The Fourth Scene in the History of Redeemed Humanity ; or, the Age of Retribution.**

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead,” &c.—Rev. xx. 11-15.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-first.

THERE was one fact common to all the preceding epochs through which redeemed humanity had passed;—they were all *probationary*. They were all connected with the overtures of mercy to the guilty, and the means of spiritual purity, blessedness, and elevation, for the polluted, unhappy, and degraded. But the probationary element, which had run on through all dispensations, from Adam to Christ, and through all revolutions, from Christ to the consummation of the world, is now closed; its last ray has fallen, its sun has gone down to rise no more. Hence-on, every man shall be treated according to his own works, and shall reap the fruit of his own doings. The morning of *retribution* has broken—

“The day has dawned, that never more shall close.”

The magnificent passage before us points to the period, designated in scripture, “The day of God;” “The judgment of the great day;” “The revelation of the righteous judgment of God;” “The eternal judgment.”

It may be well to premise at the outset, in order to guard against the tendency of associating too much of what is merely material and human with the circumstances and trans-

actions of this period, that we are not to suppose that this retribution will literally involve the judiciary circumstances here pourtrayed. I have heard and read discourses on this subject, which impress the mind more with a kind of OLD BAILEY scene, than with the great moral facts which distinguish that period from all preceding times. It is true, that we have such materials as "throne," and "books," common to human courts; but it should be remembered that inspired writers, in accommodation to our ordinary habits, aye, and laws of thought, do reveal to us the unknown, through the medium of the known. What mind, in sooth, can receive any new idea without comparing and harmonizing it with the old? We judge of the unseen by the seen; we learn what the testimony of others unfolds to us, through the medium of what we have already beheld. Thus, "The day of judgment" is set forth under the figure of ancient courts of judicature, which in general features agree with all the modern courts in the civilized world. There is the judge on his seat, or throne; there is the prisoner arraigned; there is the investigation carried on through "books" or documents; and there is justice administered.* Now, there is quite sufficient resemblance between these courts of human justice and the judicial transactions of God at the last day, to warrant the former being employed as illustrations of the latter, without supposing a "throne," "book," or any formal scrutiny whatever. First: *There is the bringing of the judge and the accused into conscious contact.* Secondly: *There is the final settling of the question of guiltiness, or non-guiltiness, according to recognized law.* Thirdly: *There is the administration of an award to which the accused is bound to submit.*

Let us now proceed to notice a few facts in relation to this retributive period:—

I. THIS RETRIBUTIVE PERIOD WILL DAWN WITH OVERPOWERING SPLENDOR UPON THE WORLD. Observe—

* See Jahn's Political Antiquities, chap. III. sec. 243, &c.

First : *The judge's manifestation.* He comes on a throne. A "throne" is an emblem of glory. It is generally valuable in itself; that of Solomon consisted wholly of gold and ivory; but its glory mainly consists in its being the seat of supremacy. Hence, ambition points to nothing higher. The people have ever looked up with a species of adoration to the throne. But what a throne is this! "His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire." It is a "white throne." Human thrones have often, perhaps generally, been stained by sensuality, injustice, and tyranny. It has sometimes become so loathsome that the people, roused into indignation, have seized and burnt it in the streets. But this is a "white throne." There is not a single stain upon it. He who has ever occupied it "is light, and in him is no darkness at all." It is a *great* "white throne."—Great in its occupant: He filleth all in all.—Great in its influence. Toward it the eyes of all intelligences are directed; to it all beings are amenable; from it all laws, that determine the character and regulate the destiny of all creatures, proceed.

Observe—

Secondly : *The effect of this manifestation.* Before its refulgence this material universe could not stand; it melted—it vanished away. "No more place was found for them." It will pass away, perhaps, as the orbs of night pass away in the noontide of the sun: they are still in being—still in their orbits, and still move on as ever; but they are lost to us by reason of a "glory that excelleth."

What a contrast between Christ now as the judge, and Christ of old as the despised Nazarene!

II. THIS RETRIBUTIVE PERIOD WILL WITNESS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AND THE CONSEQUENT DESTRUCTION OF HADES AND THE GRAVE. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them."

The words suggest two thoughts on this subject:—

First: *That in the resurrection there will be a connexion between man's raised, and man's mortal, body.* It is evidently implied that the resurrection body is a something that has come up out of the old body, which was deposited either in the grave or the sea. What is the connexion? Is it meant that men will come up with exactly the same bodies as they had during their probationary state? This, probably, is the vulgar idea, and this is the idea against which infidels level their objections. Their question is now, as of old, "With what body do they come?" And assuming that they come in the same body, they commence their antagonistic reasonings, and their sneers. But this is not the scripture doctrine. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be." If it be said, Is there no identity—no sameness? I ask, What do you mean by sameness? If you say sameness, in the sense of *particles, bulk, or capacity*, I answer, *No!* The *sameness* between the old body and the resurrection body is the sameness between the seed you deposit in the soil and the wheat which in autumn is produced by it. The one grows out of the other, has the form of the other, and the attributes and uses of the other: or, to take a more appreciable illustration, the resurrection body is the *same* as the old probationary body, in the same sense as the body of any given individual is the same in its *man-state*, as it was in its *child-state*. Take the case of a man in two different periods of life—say ten years of age and sixty. In the intervening periods his body has passed through several *radical* changes; yet, at sixty he *feels* that he has the same body which he had at ten. It is not until your *science* comes that he questions it; and where the science has been the most convincing, it has never destroyed this underlying *consciousness of physical identity*. How can you account for this *consciousness* of sameness? (1.) *Not because he knows the particles to be the same.* He cannot know that, for it is contrary to fact;—the particles of his body, when a child, having gone off long ago, and mixed themselves, perhaps, with a hundred different bodies. (2.) *Not because he knows the*

amount is the same. He may know that there are four times the quantity in the one body-state as in the other. (3.) *Not because he knows the capability is the same.* In its childish stage it was weak, incapable of much labour, or endurance; but in its man-state, it is vigorous,—its physical powers have increased manifold. How, then, can you account for this consciousness? Consciousness must have some truth as a foundation. First: *Because he knows the one has risen out of the other.* It has been a growth—an elaboration. The causal connexion has been preserved. The one was the outcome of the other. Secondly: *Because he knows the one has retained the same plan, or outline, as the other.* If the body, in the man-state, had taken a form different to that of its child-state, the consciousness of identity might have been lost. If it passed, for instance, from the human form to the lion, eagle, or any other, form, though the particles might have been all retained, and bulk and capacity continued as ever, the sense of identity would have been lost. Thirdly: *Because he knows the one fulfils the same functions as the other.* The body, in the child-state, was the inlet and outlet of the mind. Through it, in all cases, the man derived and imparted his feelings and ideas. It was the great medium between his spirit and the material universe.

Now, for these *three reasons*, man may *feel* that his resurrection-body is the same as the one in which he spent his probationary life. *It grows out of the buried.* There is in the grave, out of which it is constructed, a something, I know not what, which the man takes into his immortal frame. *The resurrection-body will retain its present form or outline*,—it will be moulded after the same archetype. *It will also fulfil the same functions.* Ever will it be the medium between the material and the spiritual. I know, then, of no objection that you can urge against the fact of a man having a resurrection-body which he will feel to be identical with his probationary body, that could not, an-

tededently, be urged against a fact in the present experience of every adult,—the fact of an individual having a man-body, which he *feels* to be the same as his child-body.

The words suggest—

Secondly: *That the resurrection will be co-extensive with the mortality of mankind.* “The sea gave up its dead.” What a vast cemetery is the sea! Here mighty navies slumber; millions of the industrious, the enterprising, and the brave, lie beneath its restless waves. But all must now come forth. All that have perished,—whether in the barks of scientific expedition, or the ships of commerce, or the fleets of conquered nations, must come forth in this dread day.

“Death delivered up the dead which were in it.” This is the grave. “All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the son of man, and shall come forth.” What a voice is that! How it will reverberate over sea and land, from island to island, from continent to continent. It shall roll its thunders through the deepest vaults and catacombs; and the mouldering skeletons, and the scattered dust shall feel the stir of life, and spring to immortality. Martyrs, who had no grave to shelter them from the storm of ages, whose dust was consumed in the flames, and left at the mercy of the wild elements, shall have their frames organized again; the field of battle, where mighty armies struggled in demon fury, shall start to life on the plains where, in hellish rage, they fell.

“And hell gave up its dead.” Hell, here, means, not the place of punishment, but the universe of disembodied spirits, both good and bad. This *Hades* of the Greeks, and *Sheol* of the Hebrews, sends forth all the myriads of human souls that it has ever received, from Abel to the last man that grappled with the “king of terrors.”

“The small and great.” Not an infant too young, nor a patriarch too old. Tyrants and their slaves, sages and their pupils, ministers and their people—all will appear.

“When the dread trumpet sounds, the slumbering dust,
 Not unattentive to the call, shall wake,
 And every joint possess its proper place,
 With a new elegance of form unknown
 To its first state. Nor shall the conscious soul
 Mistake its partner, but, amidst the crowd,
 Singling its other half, into its arms
 Shall rush, with all the impatience of a man
 That’s new come home ; and having long been absent,
 With haste runs over every different room
 In pain to see the whole. Thrice happy meeting !
 Nor time nor death shall ever part them more.”

III. THIS RETRIBUTIVE PERIOD WILL BRING HUMANITY INTO CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.” They *stand* before God, they confront Him, as it were, eye to eye, being to being. Each *feels* God to be everything to him now. The idea of God fills every soul as a burning flame. They *stand* before Him, *feeling* His presence, and *awaiting* His doom-fixing word.

This is a distinguishing feature of the retributive period. In every preceding period of human history, with the exception of the millennial ages, the vast majorities of all generations had no *conscious contact* with God. Some denied his very being, whilst others desired not a knowledge of His ways. But hence-on, for ever and ever, all the good and the bad will “stand before God”—will be in conscious contact, with Him. His *felt* presence will be the heaven of the good, and His *felt* presence, too, will be the hell of the evil.

First: *There will be no atheism after this.* How will the atheist teachers of the past ages feel now?—Lucretius, Democritus and Strato, among the ancients ; Diderot, Lagrange, D’Alembert, Mirabeau and Hobbes, amongst the moderns, will *feel* now, and *evermore*, that the greatest reality in the universe was the being whose existence they *impiously* denied.

Secondly: *There will be no deism after this.* The men who taught, through preceding ages, the doctrine, that God

had no immediate connexion with His creatures—that He governed the universe through an inflexible system of laws—that He took no cognizance of individuals, and felt no interest in them, will *know* now that no being in the universe had been in such *close contact* with every particle and period of their existence, as God. All the objects that intervened between God and the soul will be withdrawn now;—the veil of sense and matter will be rent assunder, to unite no more.

Thirdly: *There will be no indifferentism after this.* God's being, presence, and claims, will no longer be subjects of no importance. They will be everything to all. God's presence will fill the conscious life of all, as mid-day sun without a cloud the day.

IV. THIS RETRIBUTIVE PERIOD WILL SETTLE FOR EVER THE QUESTION OF EVERY MAN'S CHARACTER AND DESTINY. "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," &c.

Here observe three things:—

First: *That the worth of a man's character will be determined by his works.* "According to his works." Not by religious position, or creed, or profession, or office; but by "works." "What has a man done"? will be the question.

Secondly: *That a man's works will be determined by recognized authorities.* "Books" will be opened. God's *moral* and *remedial* laws are books, and these books will now be opened—opened to memory, to conscience, and the universe. This will be a day of *moral conviction*.

Thirdly: *That according to the correspondence, or non-correspondence, of man's works with these recognized authorities, will be his everlasting destiny.* "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." "The book of life,"—the *remedial* law, or scheme of salvation,—the gospel. Whoever was not found *vitally* interested in this, was cast into the lake of fire.*

* See p. 199.

What a scene is this that has past under review! In *its* light how mean do man's highest dignities and honours appear! How ineffably paltry the pageantry of courts, how empty the pretensions of sovereigns! How solemn is life, in all its stages, relations, and aspects! God help us to live in the light of "*that day!*"

SUBJECT:—*Balaam; or, Spiritual Influence—Human and Divine.*

"And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they. And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me; for I will promote thee," &c.—Num. xxii. 15-18.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-second.

THE history of Balaam, as detailed in this and the foregoing verses, furnishes us with some striking and suggestive views of the all-important doctrine of *spiritual influence*. The text contains two ideas touching this subject; and the whole history of this extraordinary man will illustrate them.

I. THE INFLUENCE OF A BAD MAN UPON SOCIETY. The impious pretensions of the man to supernatural endowments—his avocation, as a professed enchanter—obtaining his livelihood by imposing upon the credulity of society—and the description which Peter has given of him, as one "who loved the wages of unrighteousness," are obviously sufficient to warrant us in regarding him as a bad man:—a man whose heart was not right in the sight of God. Now, mark the influence of this bad man upon the *mind* of his age; "And Balak yet sent princes, more, and more honourable." Kings and nations stand as spiritual serfs before him, tremulous and suppliant; he seems to hold their heart-reins within his magic grasp; the Moabites and Mi-

dianites, with their rulers, bowed with more reverent prostration before his mystic wand, than to any imperial sceptre.*

The influence of a bad man upon society, shows three things:—

First: *That a man's influence in this world is no proof of his moral worth.* I think that the amount of a man's influence in society should always be measured by his spiritual excellence,—intellectual and moral. It is unquestionably so in heaven, and wherever else moral society is in its normal and healthy state. The influence of a corrupt spirit, in a circle thoroughly intelligent and good, would only be as the smoke of a taper upon the azure of a bright summer's morn. But in this world, some-how or other, your Balaams,—your men who love most the ways of unrighteousness,—your great showy, mouthy, arrogant, pretenders, do, in church and state, and almost in every profession, obtain the most influence. The millions of all ages readily accede to the claims of the pretender, however lofty;—and the more lofty the better, if the claimant can manage to keep his countenance while the admiring dupes look on.

The influence of a bad man upon society shows—

* A striking illustration of the extent and supremacy of his influence, you have in the former verses of this chapter. The Israelites, in pursuing their journey toward Canaan, pitch their tents in the land of Moab, a district, it would seem, the most fertile and lovely in the regions of Arabia. The natives are struck with alarm at the teeming numbers of a people, concerning whom, probably, they had been recently hearing of triumphant achievements, and stupendous miracles. Fearing, lest they should fall victims to such a formidable power, they send for the Midianites, a neighbouring nation, who shared in the panic of the hour, adopted an expedient which showed the transcendent influence which Balaam had obtained over their minds. The two nations, instead of organizing armies to meet the exigences of the case, despatched a deputation to Balaam with “the rewards of divination in their hands,” in order to enlist his help as a mighty *enchanter*. The first deputation was unsuccessful; another trial is made. Balak sends out to him “princes, more, and more honourable than they,” with greater offerings still. (chap. xxii. 1-19.

Secondly: *That society, in relation to true intelligence and right sympathy, is in a very lamentable state.* What gave Balaam this influence? The ignorance and superstitious feelings of the men of Moab and Midian. Had these men's minds been instructed in the great laws of nature and God—had the eye of thought, and the sharper and farther-seeing eye of true moral feeling, been opened and brightened within them by a right education, they would have despised and denounced, as an impious impostor, the man they now worshipped and propitiated as a God. A true education—an education involving the harmonious unfolding of the feeling, as well as knowing faculties, of the soul, will make man a “discerner of spirits,”—enable him to see degradation under the gorgeous garb of emperors, and iniquity under the sacerdotal robes of reverend Fathers in God. Your Balaams cannot live under the ever-brightening heavens—before the ever-quickenning eye of a *well* educated people. The intellectual rabble will always have their Balaams—they like to be fooled.

The influence of a bad man upon society shows—

Thirdly: *The high probability of a future retributive economy.* Every country and every age, have had their Balaams;—men who, by the assumption of a wondrous superiority over their contemporaries, and by fraudulent dealings, have extorted immense revenues from the hard earnings of poverty, and unbounded honors and applause from the serf-minded, the credulous, and superstitious. Shall these craft-victim millions of all generations have no redress for ever? Are the Balaams to meet with no retribution in the future? Does not the mutual relation between empty pretenders and the ignorant victims of all ages predict a reckoning day, and cry out for a judgment? I think so.

We have in the text—

II. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GREAT GOD UPON A BAD MAN.
“If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold,

I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind." Now, you observe, that this conviction he expresses of his impotency to do anything without God's help, was fully realized in the history of his efforts.*

* Stimulated by the appeal which Balak had addressed to his avarice, he makes the attempt. "And Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab." &c. (21-34.) This passage informs us, that on the way the ass is frightened by some strange object which appears before its vision, it refuses to go on, it turns aside into another road, it presses close against the wall or hedge, and then lies down. Balaam, enraged with the affrighted animal, smites it with his "staff"; for he seems determined to go on, though he knows that it is contrary to the express will of heaven and the monitions of his own conscience. The ass speaks and rebukes him; the angel of the Lord appears to him "with a sword drawn in his hand," and says, "Wherefore has thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee because thy way is perverse before me," &c. Balaam is by this extraordinary interposition brought to a temporary sense of his sin; whereupon he receives authority to go on with the princes of Balak, with a prohibition at the same time to utter no word, but that which the "angel of the Lord" should give him. (21-35.) He accordingly proceeds on his journey; he meets with Balak, who presents him with "oxen and sheep," takes him up into the "high places of Baal, where he might command a view of the utmost part of the people,"—the Hebrews, whom he was required to curse. Here, according to Balaam's request, altars were built and sacrifices were offered. Balak fully hoped that the mighty enchanter would soon hurl his thunders of anathema upon the people encamped on the plains below; and Balaam, unquestionably, again intended to do so. But lo! the hand of God was on him, and instead of cursing, he blesses, in strains of lofty poetry. "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" &c. (xxiii. 8-10.) Balak is sadly disappointed, and another effort to curse the chosen people is made. Balaam is conducted by the monarch to Pisgah; altars are built and sacrifices are offered there. All is ready. The monarch now expects every moment to hear the curses fulminate from the lips of Balaam; and he too, intends: but the hand of God is on his spirit still, and sweet and precious words flow from his lips concerning the character, privileges, and destiny of Israel. (xxiii. 10-24.) Balak resigns all hope of ruining Israel; all that he entreats now is, that Balaam shall be neutral in the matter. For this pur-

In relation to this part of our subject, we wish you to observe three things:—

First: *That God does exert a spiritual influence over the minds of bad men.* Popular theology would give one to understand that divine influence is limited only to the church, that the spirit of God has to do only with the true disciples of Jesus. But reason, history, and the Bible, show that he operates by his spirit upon the hearts of unconverted men. He has access to all souls—he turns the hearts of wicked men as rivers are turned. He strove with the old world; and ever since the days of Christ, has he sought to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. We observe—

Secondly: *That the spiritual influence he exerts over the minds of bad men is of a restraining character.* He restrained Balaam, now, from doing what his avarice stimulated him to desire, by *external difficulties*:—there were the angel with a drawn sword in his hand, the rebuke of the ass, and an *inward pressure upon his spirit*. “All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do.” It is in some such way God restrains wicked men now. He puts some external circumstances in their way, or some deep impression on their spirits. Thus he holds them back. This restraint which God puts upon a sinner is incompatible with two things:—(1.) *True liberty*. We talk eloquently about liberty, and struggle for it through difficulties and through perils; but few of us understand what it is; and fewer still possess it. True liberty, in its widest sense, consists in power to accomplish *every volition*. The great Creator seems to have given to all creatures a capacity equal to the demands of their instincts—and in this is their liberty. The little bird has no desire to execute the feats of the

pose he is brought to “the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon;” here altars are built and sacrifices offered as before. The expectation only is, now, that Balaam shall be neutral—that he shall not bless, if he does not curse. But words of blessing flow involuntarily again from his mouth. “How goodly are thy tents,” &c. (xxiv. 5-9.)

beast of the field ; nor do the cattle upon the hills desire to mount the heavens and to mingle with the fowls of the air ;—their power of willing is bounded by their power of executing. Herein is their freedom, and herein is the freedom of all creatures. He who wills that which he has not the power of realizing, is a slave ;—and this is what the sinner is ever doing. He desires happiness from material sources, he desires to break the shackles of human responsibility, he desires to move through life, independent of the will of God ; and these desires he has no power whatever to accomplish : he is struggling to accomplish eternal impracticabilities. He is like an eagle in the cage—in an unnatural position, confined, desiring to burst the bars, but has no power,—bruising his breast in every attempt. A sinner, so long as he is a sinner, must be a slave. The first thing that religion does for a man, is to harmonize his will with his power, or rather bring his will into harmony with God's, and link him to almighty power. God's influence upon a bad man is restraining ; and in restraining, reduces him to a felt slavery. God's influence upon a good man is to stimulate, and to strengthen ; and in doing so, gives him the highest aspirations and the widest sphere of liberty. (2.) *Incompatible with happiness.* There never can be happiness in this state. We observe—

• Thirdly : *That God's restraining influence upon a bad man is for the good of society.* Thus Balaam had the desire to curse the chosen people—to hurl his anathemas upon their heads. But God restrained him. Thus he ever restrains wicked men—He provides a St. Helena for the world's Napoleons. The Devil himself is held in restraint ; he cannot move one of his gigantic faculties without heaven's permission. Let the church rejoice. “The Lord reigneth.”

My Brother, learn from this what you *cannot* do, what you *may* do, what you *must* do, what you *ought* to do. I tell you what you cannot do : you *cannot* go beyond divine permission, you *cannot* thwart the plans of heaven ; you may as well endeavour to arrest the Atlantic billows, or roll

back the massive orbs, as to do aught without His permission :—your soul is within His mighty grasp. I tell you what you may do : you *may* injure men, you may desecrate your life, you may plunge your being into depths of ever-increasing woe. I tell you what you must do : you *must* serve God, whether you will or no. Whether you shall serve Him or not, comes not within your choice nor within the choice of any creature, however great or free—that you *must* do ; you can choose whether you will serve him *against* your will or *by* your will, but you cannot choose as to whether you shall serve Him or not. I tell you what you ought to do : you *ought* to serve God with a willing mind and a loving heart !

SUBJECT :—*Paul and the Crew Feasting in the Tempest ;
or, Lessons on Life.*

“Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off ; and while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat,” &c.—Acts xxvii. 32-37.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-third.

THE centurion and his band promptly did what Paul's asseveration suggested. Before the mariners could descend into the boat, the sharp swords of the soldiers severed the ropes. Necessity was thereby imposed on the panic-stricken and selfish shipmen to share the fortunes of the passengers.

I. SEVERITY IS OFTEN KINDNESS, STIMULATED TO EXPRESS ITSELF ENERGETICALLY, IN VIEW OF TERRIBLE EXIGENCIES AND FORMIDABLE DANGERS. Probably, as the boat was the one moment violently dashed against the shattered ship, and the next tossed far off, by the fierce and clamorous billows, the Alexandrian sailors stood petrified by despair, or convulsed with rage. The howl of desperation may have

mingled with the roar of the tempest, and the indescribable creaking and groaning of the dilapidated ship, &c. The demon of revenge may have clamoured for work along with the "demon of the storm," &c. Yet, the stern Romans were the benefactors of the disappointed sailors. The latter may have deemed the destruction of the boat a ruthless and cruel deed—the forerunner of their own ruin. In reality, however, it was an expedient, wiser, and more conducive to their safety, than the one which had been so summarily defeated. The success of their own project, in so far as the abandonment of the ship was concerned, would have been prophetic of inevitable disaster. Probabilities of reaching the shore were against them; they knew that there were breakers holding revel among the treacherous rocks, &c. But no more than the soldiers and the prisoners did they know their exact locale. Their avoidance of them, or transition through them, was very improbable; and besides, there was One, whose minister the tempest was, whom they had despised, in setting at nought His words spoken by his servant Paul. Though they had succeeded in leaving the ship, the angel of retribution might overtake them. They were subjected to no calamity when they were compelled to "abide in the ship." They were much indebted to the fierce men, who without any waste of words, remanded them to their duty. Illustrations of our position will readily occur to the reader.

II. INTELLIGENT AND EARNEST CHRISTIANS ARE NOT STUPIDIFIED AND PARALYZED BY CRITICAL OCCASIONS. As the sable robes of midnight were gradually fringed with light, proclaiming the advent of the blessed dawn, Paul was not unemployed; he summoned his companions in peril to prepare to meet the emergency which the morning would reveal in all its magnitude. He may have been regarded by the heathen sailors and soldiers as a theorist, an enthusiast, or a fanatic. He was the most practical man on board of the imperilled ship. Earnest Christianity gives depth and

width to native shrewdness and sagacity. It endows with a rare tact, &c. Paul had a vivid perception of the requirements of the moment, &c. A fanatical man would have prayed and preached. Than Paul, no man ever estimated the importance of sermons more highly. In a transcendent degree, he knew the potentiality of devotional addresses; yet, being a man of profound common sense, *he had regard to time and place*, in practically attesting the estimation in which he held preaching and praying.

He entreated his companions to meet the urgent exigencies of the hour—to regard, in a manly and an energetic manner, the responsibilities of the present crisis. Their lives were in jeopardy. The peril might be averted. The awful fact and the cheering contingency, were the matters on which he would have his companions to concentrate their attention and energies.

His entreaty, though not embodying evangelical truth, was expressive of the spirit of the gospel. It attested his benevolent consideration. It signified his wise appreciation of the circumstances in which they were placed. It teaches us that Christianity, like an angel of benignity, as it is, takes cognizance of man, not merely as involved in evils which proclaim the derangement of his moral relations, but as liable to the sufferings, and trials and disasters, incidental to connexion with the material world.

III. PHYSICAL APPETITE IS NOT NECESSARILY THE MIGHTIEST FORCE IN MAN. “Ye have taken nothing.” This is not to be viewed absolutely. Though the fast had been more in harmony with the significance of the word, than modern fasts, the apostle did not mean to affirm that they had not partaken of any food for fourteen days. They had not taken adequate sustenance,—neither having had opportunities nor inclination to enjoy a regular meal. No great physiological knowledge is required for the appreciation of his words. Even in men, whose “God is their belly,” appetite succumbs to any vehement emotion. Let *fear* throw

its gloomy pall around a human soul, and the dinner hour is not so eagerly longed for, nor does the sight of delicacies irresistibly appeal to the palate. Let despair envelope a *gourmand* in its leaden and sombre wings, and although M. Soyer's Cookery Book is more attractive to him than a glorious epic, or a profound dissertation, or a graphic and philosophic history, the cravings of the stomach will be disregarded, and the man will make the discovery that he has faculties which can be more despotic than the organs which connect him with the *cuisine*.

IV. GOOD MEN EXPRESS THANKFULNESS FOR BOUNTIES WHICH MINISTER TO THEIR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING. Paul "gave thanks to God." He did what the Blessed One taught us to do, not by formal counsel, but by his example. (Matt. xv. 36.) He gave a practical comment on his own declaration. (1 Tim. iv. 4.) Men who do not recognize divine kindness in the temporalities of life, are not religious. They are practical atheists. Few more saddening and repulsive spectacles than that presented by a man who sits down to "eat and drink" with no thought of God's generosity in his mind—who no more acknowledges God for his table comforts, than the dog or cat, to which he gives a morsel from his plate! Our remarks do not apply to *all* men who do not "say grace," or "ask a blessing," &c., as the formulas may be. There *may* be profound thankfulness, and a loving reference of bounties to God's open hand, when no word is spoken. They are applicable to those who do not, as they sit down to table—they *can* do it there, if not when among machinery, or tools, or wares, or ledgers—think appreciatively, for a moment, of divine goodness in supplying their physical necessities.

V. ONE GOOD MAN MAY INFLUENCE MULTITUDES OF HIS FELLOWS. "They were all of good cheer." The inspiration of hope lighted up every countenance. Two hundred and seventy-five human beings were led to realize the

responsibilities of their position—were extricated from the slough of despondency by the kindly, calm, and confident words of *one*.

Paul, alone, had true power in that ship—the power of practical wisdom and energetic faith. Minorities are not to be disparaged and slighted, as such. One man of moral might is worth a thousand devoid of robust faith in God, and earnest philanthropy. Let no Christian depreciate his own individuality. Each one of us may influence men of less spiritual force; and inferior intellectual attainments may, to some extent, mould them. May God give us power over all with whom we come in contact !

Dundee.

DAVID COOK.

SUBJECT :—*How to Think at Calvary.*

“It is finished,” &c.—John xix. 30.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-fourth.

ALTHOUGH there be no sacred oracle with which a Christian is more familiar, or by which he is more affected and cheered, than the last words of the Saviour on the cross,—“*It is finished !*”; there is yet no oracle of God we have more need to study often and deeply all through life, if we would either conduct or close the pilgrimage of life well. We cannot “finish our course” as Paul did, unless, like Paul, we “glory in the cross of Christ,” and “bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” Thus only can “the life of Christ be manifest,” either, in us or by us !

Such being the solemn and sober fact, or the real secret of both living and dying well, it is well that the sublime oracle, “It is finished !” is a favourite oracle in the church ; set to her sweetest music, and made the chief melody of her warmest hearts, and setting on fire her most influential

minds. For we owe much to the high *place* it there holds in the worship and work of the sanctuary. Minister and people, pastor and flock, would slumber over it oftener than they do, did they not *expect* it to be brought out, from sabbath to sabbath, as "the top stone," as well as the foundation, of all faith and duty, and of all right thinking and feeling. Ministers know that the sheep and lambs of the flock, expect to be led to their "still waters," and enabled to lie down in their "green pastures"; and both the sheep and lambs of the good shepherd, know that their pastors expect them to take a lively interest in their *crowning* theme of the Christian ministry. Thus, they alternately check or charm each other, by their mutual expectations on their cardinal point.

But whilst such mutual *re-action* is well so far, it is not enough, in order to keep either up to the *mark*, in glorying in the cross of Christ. A higher charm, as well as a stronger check, than their opinions or expectations of each other, is wanted by both, if they would keep up their zest and zeal for the finished work of Christ. They can neither alarm nor allure each other enough on that turning point, to keep it a *turning* point, or, for ever first, and full of glory, in their own estimation. They may keep it a *settled* point between them, by their mutual watchfulness, in guarding and celebrating it; but they must be, individually, both thoughtful and prayerful in reference to it, if they would keep up a spirit of adoring "wonder, love, and praise," for the finished work of the cross. It is, therefore, a matter of great and grave importance, to have, in addition to the simple and sweet views of that work, with which we are most familiar, some one, or more, *general* view of it, which cannot be taken without some *set* thinking; nor kept without frequent considerations; nor enjoyed, without increasing our desire to look deep "into the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

This is exceedingly desirable, and not very difficult either, even in the case of Christians who have not much time or

power for such thinking. It is easier than they imagine. If, indeed, deep thinking were *dry* thinking, or were wordy thoughts and misty ideas, *real* meditations, I would not commend to any private Christian, to think *out* general principles for himself; but would advise him to keep upon the surface of Redemption, just as he keeps on the surface of the earth, gathering whatever flowers and fruit he can on Calvary, instead of digging and mining amongst the foundations of the cross, or star-gazing from its summit. But real thinking is neither dry, dark, nor hard, thinking, when Redemption is the subject, and enjoyment the object, and love to Christ the motive of it. All really great and good ideas are simple. They cease to be vast, when they become vague; and to be vital, when they border upon mysticism.

Besides, a Christian pays but a poor compliment to his Bible—indeed, he does it injustice and himself an injury—when he allows himself to suppose that it cannot make him a *happy* thinker at the cross of his Saviour, both as to success and delight in meditating there. Why, the single and bare, but sad, fact, that his sweet views of the Saviour often lose their sweet influence over him, and almost their *hold* upon him, should suggest to him that there is surely some way of looking at the gospel, that would enable him to look at the Cross with both a steadier eye and a warmer heart. Indeed, his frequent lack of comfort and loss of relish, as well as his occasional fear of losing his soul also, ought to set him upon some plan or process for preventing this; for dim and cold views of Redeeming Love are bad things to live upon, and worse to die upon.

But it will be said, the question is, are there any easy ways; and if so, which of them is the best for taking, or obtaining, such *general* views of the finished work of Atoning Redemption, as would keep up, in both life and power, the current ideas on the subject, which, when vividly realized, and whilst they last in all their glory, are so sweet and sanctifying? Now, in answer to this question,

I would venture to suggest *one* way which, if it be not the best, will, at least, vary the usual point from which we set out in our ordinary meditations. It is this, that the Redemption finished on the cross is not the *only* finished work of God and the Lamb. Creation, as well as Redemption, is a finished work. Hence, Moses says, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." (Gen. ii. 1.) Now, how does this finished work in Nature place and pledge us, in order to our getting the full *benefits* of it, so far as we really need them?

This question is easily answered. We expect no *new* sun or moon in these finished heavens, and no new fruit, grain, or cattle, on this finished earth. Plants, minerals, and metals, may yet be discovered, which will be new to man; but they are as old as Creation in themselves. In the meantime, however, enough of the riches of the earth, and of the order of the heavens, for all the ordinary purposes of life, is discovered and understood. We know what to eat, and how to raise it, or where to find it. Clothing is added from year to year, of either animal or vegetable life; nor, ever has it failed, since God finished his work; and nothing more is wanted, in order to our living, if the created *stock* last and be fairly dealt with. No wise or good man, however, leaves it to either accident or charity to provide his food or clothing out of this Finished Creation, if he is able to labour with his own hands for a livelihood. The very fact, that God's *providing* work is a finished work, bends and binds man to take up with it as such, and to turn it to the best account he can for his own good. He expects no ravens to feed him, nor any miracle to clothe him. He does even more than labour in his own way "for the meat that perisheth." He also watches the weather, and takes a lively interest in both the scientific experiments and the state policy that increase and cheapen the means of subsistence; nor does he ever dream, even for a moment, that the highest forms, or the hardest efforts, of modern agriculture, either *merit* sunshine

or shower, or bind God to keep His covenant with the earth. Accordingly, a wise and good man is as thankful for a good harvest, after the best husbandry, as if it were as great a mercy as the first harvest that ripened after the ground was cursed for man's sake ; or, the first after the Flood.

Now, why should not this be the way in which both Christians, and "almost" Christians, look at the finished work of Christ? When it was finished on Calvary, even the disciples of Christ understood it as little as the family of Adam did the capabilities of the earth, or the order of the heavens, at first. Both got all their practical wisdom by waiting upon, and for, God, in the use of appointed means. Agriculture, by diligence, secured abundance ; and diligence in prayer and meditation brought, at Pentecost, the lights that brightened all the mysteries of the Cross, and filled the first churches "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Why not, then, place ourselves in just that position and spirit towards the finished work of Christ, in which, without any great effort, we do stand towards the finished work of Creation? For no miracles are wrought now in order to give any man the benefit or the comfort of either ;—nor are any expected by men of common sense. All men, who are deeply interested in the price and plenty of provisions, keep their eye, and their heart too, steadily fixed upon the best means of regulating both for the general good. No man grudges the time or thought required in order to watch the weather, nor finds it difficult to feel as he ought about harvests. And why? Just because he acts rationally, or lets himself be fairly influenced by his own personal interests for this world. Why not then, think and act as wisely for "the world to come," also? Why not look at the cross, as we do at the fields? For, our temporal life is not more dependent upon food, than our eternal life is upon Christ, as the "bread of Life."

Maberly Cottage.

R. PHILIP.

SUBJECT:—*The Relation of Christ to the Human Intellect.*

“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”—Luke xxiv. 45.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-fifth.

POSTHUMOUS words are rare words. I do not know that you have any on record but those in the context. We have indeed, what are called “posthumous works,” but they are not so; the MSS. were penned before their authors died. Out of all the great teachers the world has ever had, only one has ever returned from the grave, and the spiritual world, to teach mankind again, and that is CHRIST. He had passed through the agonies of death, the darkness of the sepulchre, entered the spiritual world, and now returns to utter a few more words to his disciples.

I am disposed to think, that were some of the wisest and holiest of the world’s teachers to return from the other state, and recommence their instructive mission, they would repudiate, as false, many, and modify most, of the views they propounded as true before. But we find no alteration in Christ’s views; all he now says, is to confirm, illustrate and impress, what He had taught prior to his crucifixion; and more, He opens the understanding of His disciples, in order that they might understand all that the scriptures had stated concerning Himself.

Our subject is, the relation of Christ to the human intellect—He opens it. This illustrates three things:—*the spiritual condition of the human intellect, the religious importance of the human intellect, and the service of Christ to the human intellect.*

I. THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THE HUMAN INTELLECT. The fact that Christ “opened” it, implies that it was *closed*. The scriptures represent men as spiritually “blind.” Blindness may arise from one of three causes: the want of the

visual organ—the eye, the want of the visual medium—light, and the want of the visual disposition; the individual, by closing his eyes, may be as truly in the dark as if he had neither eyes nor light. From which of these causes is man spiritually blind? Not from the first; he has the organ; the intellect is as fitted to see spiritual things as the eye natural things: not the second; there is plenty of light—*intuition, nature, experience, the Bible*, throw around the intellect a flood of spiritual light. It is the third. Men *will* not open their intellectual eye on spiritual things. They will open it to every other branch of truth, historical and scientific; but they close it against this. Why is this? Why is man more *indisposed* to open his eye on *Biblical* truth than any other? This is the question. I may mention one or two things which meet man in this department of truth to indispose him to look rightly at it, and which he finds, perhaps, in connexion with no other branch of knowledge.

First: *There are unfavourable prejudgments, which he forms of it in the dawn of his intellectual being.* If his parents and first companions are numbered amongst its disciples, even then, with the keen *sense of consistency*, which is peculiar to childhood, he discovers even in the best, such incongruities as are likely to *prejudice* him against this system; and as he goes out into life, and his realm of observation extends, scenes and circumstances are abundant on all hands to deepen these impressions. But if, as is the case, alas! with the vast majorities of our kind, the parents and first associates are out of sympathy with the Bible, additional elements are brought upon the young mind to prejudice it against it. Now, who does not know something of the force of prejudice? The Jews are a striking illustration. This prejudice is peculiar to the Bible. Men are not *generally* prejudiced against *any other* department of truth.

Secondly: *There is a general impression made upon the*

young mind, that the Bible is unfavourable to those sensual pleasures after which the young nature thirsts, and in which it delights itself. Whether the impression is true or not, is of no moment to our argument, it is a fact that it exists ; and its existence as a natural consequence, indisposes the mind to look favourably at that book which is supposed to proscribe and denounce its most precious things. This again is peculiar to the Bible. Men do not feel that any of the sciences are unfavourable to their worldly pleasures and pursuits.

Thirdly: *There is a vague, but deep and influential, feeling that the Bible bears a solemn charge against us.* The man of business who has the impression that he is running in the line of insolvency, dreads to look into the account book. The vague idea of insolvency terrifies him ; the confirmation of that idea he knows would augment his distress, and the consequence is, that he will keep away from the account books so long as it is possible. Men have a kindred feeling about the Bible, they are afraid that it will confirm and impress the fact of their guilt, the mere dreamings of which often terrify them. This feeling, also, is peculiar to the Bible. Men are not *afraid* of any other system of truth.

Fourthly: *There is the action of evil spirits upon the mind for the purpose of indisposing it to look at Biblical truth.* "The God of this world blindeth the eyes of men," &c. They would not, perhaps, seek to indispose men to look at any other system of truth.

II. THE RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE OF THE HUMAN INTELLECT. It is opened that it *might understand the scriptures.*

Three things are here implied :—

First: *That the scriptures have a meaning for man.* It is no superficial, ephemeral, production. Some books have no meaning, but there are golden strata of divine principles lying deep beneath the outside forms of the Bible. And these principles can be appreciated by man. There are some truths, perhaps, in some of God's revelations to His creatures, that

are as far beyond the reach of the human mind, as moral truth transcends the instinct of the brute. But the truths in the scriptures *have a meaning for man*.

Secondly: *That the scriptures have a meaning for man, to get which, requires the action of his intellect.* Christ "opened" this understanding that it "might understand" the scriptures. There are two great errors about the intellect in connexion with religion; the one makes the intellect everything, the other nothing. There are some who deify the intellect; there are others who degrade it. The one error leads to *rationalism*, the other to *mysticism*. We must guard against each extreme.

Were we asked to determine the province of the intellect in the matter, we would say that it has to do four things:—(1.) to gather a convincing amount of evidence as to the divinity of the scriptures. (2.) to elicit the great truths contained in the scriptures, (3.) to seek after the *rationale* of the doctrines of the scriptures, and (4.) to apply to our own individual life all the practical elements of the scriptures. A simpering ministry may denounce intellect, but there can be no religion without it—the scriptures are a blank without it.

If one of these functions of the intellect be more important than another, it is the last—that of *personal application*. And yet, this is the most neglected. Men will employ their intellect to gather and appreciate the evidence—to ascertain the theoretical meaning—and even to discover the *rationale*, who never make the effort to bring the great principles of the gospel into the region of personal experience and every-day life. We want this *self-applying* power of the intellect to be employed on Christianity;—and then a wonderful change will come over the world. What a marvellous change has been effected in man's *secular* life by this action of the intellect in relation to physical truths! During the long ages in which the human intellect was speculating about nature, creating one ingenious hypothesis after another, the physical truths which were discovered, were of no practical

advantage to the world. Physical discoveries, even after they had become sciences, were only thought-scenes into which a few gifted minds could rise. But when, in later days, the intellect employed the *applying* function, the contents of those thought-scenes were brought down and turned to practical account; the sciences became arts; ideas clothed themselves in forms of beauty and strength, and the world was advantaged. Oceans became the high roads of nations, noxious vapours the light of cities, steam the mighty agent to do the hard work of the world—help the farmer, the manufacturer, and the mariner, and bear the chariots of all, as on the wings of the wind. Electricity, too, became our servant, bearing our thoughts with more than the speed of light, through the solid earth and granite rocks. In fact, it is by this applying power of the intellect, man has obtained all those advantages which mark and bless the civilized world. Let men begin to bring Christianity from its thought-scenes into practical life, and what a glorious change will soon come over the world!

Thirdly: *The scriptures have a meaning for man, the importance of which to him, no amount of inward light can supercede.* Christ opened the understanding, not that he might thereby *supercede* the necessity of the scriptures, but that his disciples may the better appreciate them. No inner light of Quakerdom can supercede the scriptures. The Bible is our pillar, and we want it in every step of the desert until we reach the promised land.

III. THE SERVICE OF CHRIST TO THE HUMAN INTELLECT. “He opened their understanding.”

We infer from this fact:—

First: *That His service is of a restorative character.* He “opened their understanding.” He did not give them a *new* one. Christ gives no new powers,—but restores, strengthens, and perfects, the old. He retunes the disordered harps and makes every string give music at every touch.

Secondly : *That this service is infinitely valuable.* What is more valuable than vision ! Imagine the feelings of a man born blind, on receiving his sight. With the opening of the eye, there are the opening of a new world and the inrush of a new tide of exquisite sensations. He has a new heaven and a new earth, and a new class of emotions. This is but a faint emblem of the more glorious change which that man experiences whose intellect Christ opens to see the spiritual universe in its true light. "Old things pass away," &c. Physical blindness is bad, but spiritual blindness is incomparably worse. Where there is true spiritual vision, a man may be full of light whose bodily eyes are sealed from every ray. The sightless bard of England lived in a bright world ; his sanctified genius bore him aloft to regions where there was no cloud ; eternal sunshine filled the soul of Milton. Oh ! what benefactor is equal to Him who can unseal the eye of souls !

Thirdly : *That His service indicates His sincerity.* False teachers have ever sought to *close* the eye of intellect by fallacies and mystifications. But Christ's mission is to open the eye of intellect.

Fourthly : *That His service shows His distinguishing peculiarity as a true Teacher.* The best of human teachers can only help the intellect *by* the scriptures ; Christ it seems can open the intellect *without* the scriptures ; He opened their understanding that they might *understand* the scriptures. We say not that Jesus, as a *rule*, opens the intellect without the truth, but we say that it would be impertinent dogmatism to aver that He cannot do so. No other Teacher is so near the inner heart of humanity as Jesus. He does not tarry in the outer courts of sense or reason ; He is in the sanctuary of INTUITION, the holiest and inmost part of the temple, and can fill it with that pure flame of divinity which is the light and glory of the holy universe. Doubtless, He can open the moral eye without the salve of truth.

The greatest friend of man is he who is the greatest helper of his intellect—who opens and brightens its spiritual eye. None of the greatest sages of the world can do this like Christ, as the history of His religion shows. *Christ is the best friend of the intellect, and the best friend of the intellect is the best friend of man.*

SUBJECT :—*Self-denial.*

“Even Christ pleased not himself,” &c.—Rom. xv. 3.

“Thy will be done on earth,” &c.—Matt. vi. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-sixth.

A large proportion of our acts, mental as well as physical, and the states of mind consequent upon them, are directly or indirectly under the control of the will. The will is determined by motive. Vast is the difference in the quality of the motives which determine the will. It is clear that they may conflict; it is certain that they do; it is probable that the worse will exclude the better. This is the scene where struggles, as fierce as those of armed men, have been carried on, though with no other sign of conflict than a sigh, or a groan, or bitter tears; here the sublime of heroism has been realized, or virtue weakened by defeat; unfading glory won, or cowardice disgraced. It is the sphere of *self-denial*, where love and conscience should interpose their rightful authority in opposition to the meaner claims of *self-assertion*.

The passage at the head of this paper alludes to the most illustrious pattern of self-denial which has ever been witnessed upon earth. In its present connexion it is advanced by the apostle as an incentive to social moderation and forbearance, but its aspect is as varied as the circumstances are which lead men to consult example for encouragement; and we take it here in its highest reference. Christ pleased not himself. Whom then? He pleased God. Notice—

I. WHOM CHRIST DID NOT SEEK TO PLEASE. Not himself. For the truth of the statement, we have only to consult the gospel narrative. But little is said of the youthful life of our Lord, yet we learn that in boyhood, his "Father's business" was of paramount consideration to him. When he commenced his public life, as Son of God, he was obedient to his heavenly Father, and presented, in the entire remainder of his history, an unvarying protest against self-seeking. You will see this if you think of two things :—

First: *What he might have been.* He might have been a KING. The perverted notions of the Jews respecting the expected Messiah are well known, and offered to our Lord many occasions when he could claim their application to himself by assuming the mistaken character. But he never shaped his conduct into conformity with them. Early in his public life the suggestion was made to him that, if he would worship the "devil," the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them should be his.—Not an uncommon way of obtaining thrones. On another occasion, he was asked to settle the claims of a disputed inheritance ; he declined interference, referred the claimant to the proper authorities in civil matters, and seized the occasion to impress upon the people a moral lesson :—"Beware of covetousness." So, after feeding the five thousand, &c., they would make him a king ; he departed again into a mountain, alone.

Secondly : *What he actually was.* "Though he was rich, yet, for our sakes he became poor." He anticipated the fearful termination of his career, (Mark, x. 33, 34.) but it was in the path of duty, and he did not shrink from death ; "therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.*"

II. WHOM CHRIST DID SEEK TO PLEASE.—God.

Two reasons show the desirableness of this :—

First: *God's will is always the wisest and best for us.*

- (1.) *Naturally.* We find law and its sanctions everywhere. All natural laws (with a few apparent exceptions, which are capable of reconciliation,) are adapted to the well-being of their subjects when complied with. If man violates the laws of his bodily constitution, he incurs suffering and disease; but if he obeys, he enjoys health. If he fails to obey his moral duties, he is punished by regret or remorse; if obedient, he possesses internal satisfaction and tranquility.
- (2.) *Remedially.* The perfection of the remedial scheme is this, that it saves man by purifying and ennobling him, and so prepares him for a higher state of existence. It should never be forgotten that deliverance from *guilt* is valueless unless accompanied by deliverance from *sin*.

Secondly: *Our will is often ignorant, wrong, and pernicious.* All we know of the introduction of sin into our world is, that it came through our first parents pleasing themselves in displeasing God;—an awful result of self-assertion. In the same way sin and misery have perpetuated themselves. Self-denial is necessary to well-being and happiness. If this is indispensable to *all* true and elevated friendship, it is not so much an *abandonment* as a *development* of one's proper self. We can, therefore, understand the bearing of our Lord's injunction, "If any man will come after me," &c. Which may be generalized thus:—in the frequent opposition between inclination and duty, the former must give way.

C. H. D.

SUBJECT:—*The Providence of God and the Providence of Man.*

"Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow," &c.—James iv. 13-15.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-seventh.

I. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. Observe here two things concerning His Providence. First: *The rule of it.* What

is the rule? His WILL. Ye ought to say, "If the Lord will," &c. He does what He wills. His will is the origin and law of the universe. There is nothing higher than this; it is *the force of all forces*. Observe, Secondly: *The sphere of it*. It extends over all things,—is co-extensive with the creation. But there are two particular departments of it in the text: (1.) *Human life*. "If the Lord will, we shall live." Our life depends on His will; our "times are in His hand." (2.) *Human activity*. And "do this or that," you can accomplish nothing without His will.

II. THE PROVIDENCE OF MAN. This is of two kinds—that of the Practical Atheist, and that of the Practical Theist. Those who provide for themselves without a God, and those who do so with a God.

First: *That of the Practical Atheist*. (1.) *Purely selfish*. "Buy and sell, and get gain." No thought of God—Self is everything to him; he is for "gain." (2.) *Unreasonably Presumptive*. "Go into such a city, and continue there a year." "Whereas," &c. It is unreasonable, because of the *uncertainty and fleetness* of life. "What is your life," &c.

Secondly: *That of the Practical Theist*. "For that ye ought to say," &c. God is the central thought of all this man's providence.*

αὐθρῶπος.

* This germ was given to us by the most fertile-minded man, philosophic thinker, suggestive, and eloquent preacher, we have ever known. His soul is filled with the choicest grains of truth. We write it from memory, for alas! he never writes; we received it in a free conversation, and we publish with his sanction, but without his revision. It is fair to say, that he spoke of it, not because he thought it of much value, but because it was the *last* thing he had preached. We hope to have our pages often enriched in the future with the germinant thoughts of this remarkable man.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

AUGUSTIN.

AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS, a name of the widest and mightiest influence on souls in Western Christendom, represents a certain region of theological speculation and religious feeling. It is, notwithstanding, associated with historical catholicity, and although cherished by many a heretic, is not rejected by the ecclesiastical taste. According to the title above, we have to aim at a view of the Father as a Preacher ; but if preaching be not a mere trick, or superficial knack, but rather one avenue for the issue of the soul, we shall never know the preacher if we neglect the man.

The story of Augustin's life is soon told. He was born at Tagasta, a small town in inland Numidia, in the year 354. His father, Patricius, was a man of rank, a citizen of Tagasta and holder of several municipal offices ; but was not wealthy. He was of a hot temper, and more desirous of the worldly than of the religious welfare of his son. He did not embrace Christianity until near the end of life, and he died when his son was about seventeen years old. His wife, Monica, or Monnica, as Bähr spells it, was a truly Christian mother, and with much anxiety and tenderness wrought for the religious and moral culture of her son. To this pious work the boy's headstrong nature presented a formidable obstacle. As, however, he showed signs of ability, he was early sent to study rhetoric at the neighbouring city of Madaura. His taste for this study was much more decided than for other and more solid pursuits, and he disliked so much the difficulty of acquiring the Greek tongue, that it was never effectually mastered. At the age of fifteen he returned to Tagasta, where laziness neglected study, and fowling and similar amusements consumed a year. He was then removed to Carthage, where he prosecuted rhetoric under one Democrates. Here he fell into licentiousness, which

was, however not without bounds. He seems to have really loved a concubine, who bore him a son, Adeodatus. Here, also, were developed a great ardour for study and an ambition to excel. In the course of his reading, he was much moved by the treatise of Cicero in praise of philosophy, entitled "Hortensius," now lost, with the exception of some fragments gathered from the works of this Father and others, from which it is impossible to estimate the work. "That book," he says, "changed my affection, directed my prayers to God, and rendered my vows and desires different."* His ardour in reading this book was somewhat cooled by the absence of the name of Christ. "A name which," says he, "my tender heart had drunk in beforehand with my mother's milk, and profoundly retained."* This, however, stimulated him to read the scriptures, but no congeniality was felt as yet between them and him. He shewed a decided taste for metaphysics. Bewildered in speculation touching the nature of God and the origin of evil, he embraces the Manichean heresy.

This heresy arose in the latter part of the third century. In the forms in which they have come down to us, wilfully misrepresented, perhaps, by some, and misunderstood by others, the doctrines seem quaintly monstrous—but a little consideration will enable us to conceive, that such may have had a peculiar fascination for a speculative and imaginative youth, who was far from soberness. They may be described as an attempted amalgamation of the Persian philosophy with Christian truth; the leading idea being that of two eternal principles and beings—the one good, or light, or God; the other evil, or darkness, or matter. Augustin sympathised more or less with the Manicheans until he was nearly thirty years of age. Perhaps, although he afterwards wrote against them, he never quite lost the taint. Nay, has there not been, almost from the beginning, and up to the present time, even amongst the orthodox so-called, a habit of thought, feeling, speech and conduct, touching human nature and the world, which is opposed to the spirit of Jesus, and which, though not bearing the name Manicheism, is the thing itself, arising from the same source? The Manicheans of Augustin's time declared that in many

points wherein they were accused, their principles were the same with those of the Catholics, and threw back their charges. Schleiermacher says, that this is a heresy natural to Christianity ;—it therefore behoves Christians to guard against it with watchful suspicion.

Augustin now taught grammar for a time at Tagasta, and then returned to Carthage, where he professed rhetoric. Annoyed at the conduct of his pupils, he departed in 383 to teach rhetoric at Rome. Here he joined the Academic sect. His stay, however, was short. Although he had acquired fame as a teacher of rhetoric, he did not find the employment answer his wishes in regard to remuneration. His next remove was to Milan. The orthodox, pious, eloquent, and energetic, Ambrose was then bishop of this city. He soon influenced Augustin, and gradually weaned him from Manicheism. The latter now earnestly betook himself to the study of the Platonic philosophers and of the scriptures, especially of Paul's epistles. Here he, also, became acquainted with the presbyter, Simplician, with whom he conversed on religion ; and also with Pontitian, who was a Christian and a military officer of the emperor. Pontitian described to him and Alypius, one of his friends whom he had brought over to Manicheism, the way of life of Antony, the monk of Egypt, and of his associates. This description greatly excited Augustin, and now, in August or September, 386, came what many would call his "conversion," which he thus describes in the eighth book of his "Confessions."

"When Pontitian had withdrawn, Augustin said to Alypius, 'What is this? what have you heard? The ignorant are rising to take heaven by force; and behold, we, with all our heartless lore, are wallowing in flesh and blood ! Is it because they have anticipated us that we are ashamed to follow? Should we not rather be ashamed that we do not even follow?' * After a profound meditation had drawn out from the most secret recesses of my soul, and exposed to the view of my mind all my miseries and all my wanderings, I felt a great tempest arise in my heart, which was followed by a shower of tears. In order to pour it forth entire with its accompanying groans, I rose and left Alypius, judging that solitude would be more fitting for me to weep at ease, and I withdrew to a place apart, that I might not

be troubled even with the presence of my friend. . . . I lay carelessly on the ground under a fig tree, and gave the reins to tears, and there burst forth the rivers of my eyes, an acceptable sacrifice to Thee. I said many things to Thee; if not in these words, at least with this sense:—‘And thou, Lord, how long? How long, Lord, wilt Thou be angry with me for ever? Forget my past iniquities.’ For I well knew that they possessed me. I cried out with unhappy voice, ‘How long? how long? to-morrow, and to-morrow? Why not now? why shall not my baseness finish in this hour?’ I said this, and wept with the bitterest contrition of my heart. And lo! I hear from a neighbouring house, a voice, I know not whether a boy’s or girl’s, saying in song and often repeating, ‘*Take and read, take and read.*’ Immediately, with altered countenance, I began most earnestly to ask myself, whether children were wont to sing in any kind of play aught of this sort; but I did not remember ever to have heard it. Arresting the course of my tears, I rose, believing that God commanded me to open the book of Paul’s Epistles, and read the first passage I should find. For I had heard that St. Antony, entering church one day when they were reading the Gospel, had heard and received these words as addrest to himself, ‘Go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me,’ (Matt. xix. 21.) and that, by that oracle he was in that moment converted. I therefore returned promptly to the place where Alypius was remaining; I took the book which I had left there; I opened it; and in the first place which I found I read in silence these words, ‘Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.’ (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.) I did not wish to read further, nor was it needful. I had hardly finished the sentence, when there was shed into my heart a light full of repose, which dissipated all my darkness and doubts. Keeping my finger on the passage, or in some other way marking it, I closed the book, and with tranquil countenance, told Alypius what had occurred.”*

“From all this,” as a modern writer says, “inferences may be drawn, which the reader is advised to draw.”

* Confess. VIII. viii.-xii.

(*To be continued.*)

LITERARY NOTICES.

[WE hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE CHRIST OF HISTORY ; an Argument grounded on the Facts of His Life on Earth. BY JOHN YOUNG, M. A. London : Longman and Co.

THE OLD MINE EXPLORED, AND THE GOLDEN ORE OF THE GOSPEL EXTRACTED ; an attempt to explain, and apply, some of the principal types of the Old Testament. BY JAMES SLYE, Pottersbury. London: Partridge and Oakey.

ANTI-MYSTICISM ; or, Man in his relation to the Holy Spirit, Revealed Truth, and Divine Grace. By W. R. BAKER. London : Ward and Co., Paternoster Row.

THE STATION AND OCCUPATION OF THE SAINTS IN THEIR FINAL GLORY. BY JAMES CARLILE, D. D. With an Introductory Notice, by the REV. JAMES EDWARD CARLILE, Brechin. London: James Nisbet and Co.

WE regret to find that Homilies have again encroached on our allotted space for Literary Notices, and this greatly to our present embarrassment. A goodly range of volumes now confront us on our table, and press for some acknowledgment of their existence and merits. Some deserve a review—a full and fair analysis of their contents; others moot points that provoke discussions; and others develop great general practical truths all but universally overlooked and hidden, which require to be exhibited in every light that can arrest the attention of mankind, and urged by every argument that can push them into a world-wide circulation. But we have no space for this work. We can only at present register our honest judgment.

THE CHRIST OF HISTORY is not one of your every-day works in Christian Literature. There is nothing of the Theological pen-craftsman here;—no chiseling, carving, dove-tailing, veneering, polishing, or other of the operations, of literary mechanics. It is the fresh and independent thought of a superior, cultivated, and Christ-loving mind taking its natural and, therefore, be seeming form. It is a manifest

growth, not a manufacture It is a new tree in our religious Book-plantations,—distinct from all the rest ; not large nor blossomy, but overflowing with life and heavy with fruitage. Works on “the Life of Christ” abound ;—some of a historical, others of a theological, and others of a practical character Nor is there a paucity of works aiming at the same end as the one under notice—the proving of the DEITY of Christ. But we know of no work on the subject that does not leave the labors of Mr. Young highly desirable and evidently necessary. He pursues a hitherto untrodden path of argument,—proves the true Divinity of Christ by “a new and living way.” From the *Humanity* of Christ, as it appears in authentic history, he proceeds, step by step, to work out the conclusion of His Divinity. He shows that the former is “utterly inexplicable, except on the ground” of the latter.

THE OLD MINE EXPLORED, is a work which essays to explain and apply some of the principal types of the Old Testament. The author avoids the extravagancies of many of the older type-expounders, and agrees in the main with the views of Fairbairn on the subject. Still we think his imagination makes more types than the Bible supplies. The Book is, what it professes to be, a Popular Exposition of the Subject. Though not learned, it indicates considerable research, and though not philosophic, it is suggestive. Sabbath School Teachers, and many who preach, will find it a useful book.

ANTI-MYSTICISM, is a book worth reading. The writer declares that his conviction is, “that there is no divine light or knowledge within any man ; neither common nor special light ; neither as an innate quality of reason, nor as an immediate emanation from the Holy Spirit, except so far as the mind has received external truth.” Although we have failed to reach the author’s conviction, we dissent from some of his psychological and theological views, and dislike generally, polemical divinity ; we have, nevertheless, a very high opinion of the plan, execution, aim, and tendency, of the work. It is deeply thoughtful, earnest, and practical. His creed is :—*The all-sufficiency and alone-sufficiency of the Bible, for the salvation of man—of universal man.*

THE STATION AND OCCUPATION OF THE SAINTS IN THEIR FINAL GLORY, is now a posthumous work. It is the last ripe thoughts of an earnest thinker, a devoted Christian, and an eminently useful minister upon subjects of pre-eminent interest to us all. There is much, of course, that is speculative in such a work, but the speculations are not only innocent, but suited to refine and elevate the soul. Thank God, the Bible not only gives practical directions, but opens enchanting realms of speculative thought !

"CANIADAN STIRAETHOG";* THE SONGS OF STIRAETHOG. By WM. REES. Denbigh: Ger.

HYMNS AND SACRED SONGS; for Sunday Schools and Sacred Worship. Manchester: Fletcher and Tubbs.

FAVOURITE WELSH HYMNS. Translated into English, By JOHN MORRIS, Narberth. London: Ward and Co.

THE CANIADAN STIRAETHOG is a volume containing the collected Poetical Works of the Rev. Wm. Rees; with an Essay, by the same Author, on "The Poets and Poetry of Wales." Some of these "Songs" are already well known in the Principalities; but the major part is now published for the first time. We have read the book with feelings of the most profound delight and admiration. The Poem on "Job," we have no hesitation in saying, is equal to anything in the language. That on "Peace," obtained the chair prize at the Royal Madog Eistedvodd, in 1851; and the minor Poems are all of them exquisitely beautiful. This is no common book; it must live. The "Songs of Stiraethog," will be read and admired as long as the Welsh language is spoken. We hope it will immediately obtain a circulation as large as it deserves.

THE HYMNS AND SACRED SONGS have our hearty approval and commendation. It is the best Sunday School Hymn Book in existence. It is a fit and beautiful vehicle through which the young heart can at once express and receive the highest sentiments and aspirations of our common nature. The compilers of this little work, as well as the authors of the various compositions, are gifted with the poetic sense. No man can compile a true Hymn Book, who is not himself a poet; it requires a poet's eye to see a poet.

THE FAVORITE WELSH HYMNS, of course, we like; they breathe the divine genius of our native hills, and thrill us with the memories of our earlier years, and the echoes of those old Welsh preachers, whose sermons in our boyhood, have often borne our spirits aloft as in chariots of fire. We heartily thank Mr. Morris for this translation. Let every English Christian purchase a copy of this shilling book, and read it; it will fan the latent fires into flame.

* *Stiraethog*, is a Mountain in Denbighshire, North Wales, the native place of the author; whence, after the custom of Welsh Poets, he has taken his bardic name of "Gwilym Stiraethog."

A HOMILY

ON

The Spiritual Universe:—

DISEMBODIED SAINTS.

“We are come. to the spirits of just men made perfect.”—
Heb. xii. 23.

THAT the “Spirits,” of whom the Apostle here speaks, are the Spirits of departed believers, such as those he mentions in the preceding chapter, is a view of the passage too obviously true, and too generally received, to justify any outlay of time or energy in the way of proof. This is the first impression which the passage would give a thoughtful reader, and the all but certain conclusion to which it would conduct a thoroughly critical student.

Assuming, then, the correctness of this view, the passage teaches several things concerning the Spirits of departed believers :—

I. THAT THEY CONSCIOUSLY LIVE IN A DISEMBODIED STATE. A brief analysis of this proposition may help us to receive it with a clearer view and a deeper impression.

First: *They are in a DISEMBODIED state.* We say disembodied, of course, so far as the mortal frame, the flesh and blood, in which they tabernacled when on earth, is concerned. It may be, that they have some kind of body so exquisitely ethereal and highly attenuated, as to warrant the epithet “Spiritual” being applied to it, and which will be the germ, outline, and foundation, of their resurrection body. But the

corporeal body, with the organs through which they received their impressions, and the members by which they executed their volitions, and in which they spent their probationary existence, was left on earth. It returned to dust, whilst they returned to God. The patriarchs, whose names are recorded in the preceding chapter, are amongst "the spirits of just men," mentioned in the text. And are not their sepulchres with us to this day? The particles that built the frames of the first men are all on this planet,—not a solitary atom has been borne away. They are mingling with the elements of our globe in some form or other.

Secondly: *They LIVE in a disembodied state.* Into the argument for the future existence of Spirit, it is not our intention at present to enter, having done so in a recent discourse.* All we say here in passing is, that our faith in the doctrine is not based either upon the immateriality of the soul, or its wonderful potentialities, or its eager longings for another life, or on what is ignorantly called its natural immortality, or on the apparent disorder of the moral system under which it spends its earthly existence;—but on the revealed testimony of God concerning it. All created existences are necessarily dependent upon the purpose of the Creator, and the only way of determining with *certainty* how long any being is to live, is to ascertain the purpose of Him, who ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY, respecting the matter. I believe in the immortality of man, therefore, because Christ comes to me as the Revealer of God, and declares that the Creator has purposed that the man-creature shall never die.† As believers in Christianity, it is our happiness to know that close and intimate as is the connexion between soul and body, the former will survive the ruins of the latter. The loss of the body is to the soul, but

* See p. 3.

† John vi. 28-40; xi. 25 and 26. Rom. xiv. 7, 8 and 9. 2 Cor. iv. 16-18; v. 6-9. Phil. i. 21-24. 1 Thes. v. 9 and 10. 2 Tim. i. 9 and 10. Heb. ii. 14 and 15. 1 Peter, i. 3-5.

as the loss of the telescope to the astronomer, the harp to the lyrist, the house to the resident. Though the telescope is destroyed, the astronomer lives, and may procure another instrument that will give him a clearer and a broader view of the starry universe; though the harp of the lyrist be broken, the musician survives, and may employ some other instrument, and through it pour fourth strains more lofty and thrilling than ever; and though the house of the resident fall to ruins, he may become the occupant of a palace.

Thirdly: *They CONSCIOUSLY live in a disembodied state.* This is evidently implied in the passage before us. Some who maintain the future existence of the soul doubt, and even deny, its *consciousness* during the period of its separation from the body. They hold the idea, that from the period of its departure from the body to the far-on period of its reunion at the resurrection of the last day, it will be in the unconsciousness and inactivity of a profound and unbroken sleep; that during the long series of intervening ages it will know nothing, see nothing, feel nothing, do nothing. This idea, if not favoured, is too much conceded, by no less a thinker, scholar, and writer, than Dr. Whately, the Archbishop of Dublin. "As for the state of the soul," says the distinguished primate, "in the interval between death and the general resurrection, the discussion is unnecessary and, perhaps, unprofitable. Had knowledge on this point been expedient for us, it would doubtless have been clearly revealed; as it is, we are left in conjecture. For aught we know, the soul may remain combined with a portion of matter, less than the ten thousandth part of the minutest particle that was ever perceived by our senses;—since 'great' and 'small' are *only* relative. All we can be sure of is, that if it *be* wholly disengaged from matter and yet shall enjoy consciousness and activity, it must be in some quite different manner from that in which we now enjoy them. If on the other hand, the soul remain inert and unconscious (as it is with respect to the seeing-faculty for instance, in a

man born blind) till its reunion with matter, the moment of our sinking into this state of unconsciousness will appear to us to be instantly succeeded by that of our awaking from it, even though twenty centuries may have intervened; of which any one may convince himself by a few moment's reflection."* Yielding to no one in respect for the high intellectual endowments, thoroughly philosophic views, and broad sympathies of this illustrious writer, we cannot, however, agree with him in regarding the subject of the consciousness and activity of the soul after death, as entirely a matter of "conjecture." Because, apart from all considerations suggested by the nature of the soul as an essentially active existent,—for you may as well speak of the imponderableness of matter, as the inertness of soul;—and apart also from the fact that it does act now, when the bodily senses are closed and the bodily members are motionless; and apart, moreover, from the fact, that the soul seems to have strong desires for continued consciousness;—apart I say from all such considerations which might amount to something like presumptive evidence, we think that we discover evidences in the Scriptures which place it beyond all just and reasonable "conjecture." Look, for example, at the teaching of Christ. Turn to the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus; and in the case of each, is there not a vivid and thinking consciousness? Does either Spirit sleep? Ponder the words of Jesus to the dying Thief: "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." What meaning have these words, if the soul of the Malefactor was to sink into centuries of unbroken sleep, the instant the bodily life went out? Again, if the departed sleep until the resurrection, how came it that Moses and Elias, who had left the world for long centuries, were found in conscious converse with Christ at the transfiguration? Look, also, at the teaching of the Apostle Paul. What does he mean when he says,

* See Essay on some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion, by Richard Whately, D. D., Archbishop of Dublin.—*Notes*, p. 130.

“To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”? Is it a greater gain to sleep for ages, to enjoy nothing of God and the universe through untold periods, than to be here, as Paul was, with a soul overflowing with divine love, buoyant with heavenly hopes, and absorbed in great plans and aims? What, moreover, does he mean when he speaks of death as being “absent from the body, and present with the Lord,” and expresses his strong desire on this account to die? If he had an idea of sinking into ages of inactivity and unconsciousness at death, would he have spoken of death as an event which would introduce him into the more special presence of the Lord, and earnestly desired it as such? We trow not. Again. Are the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they bore, whom you read of in the Apocalypse, as crying with a loud voice “under the altar,” “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?” Are these Spirits, thus vehement in their cries, asleep?

These few passages we briefly refer to, not by any means as comprehending the whole of the Scripture argument, but rather as a small sample of the evidence which the Bible presents on the subject. They are, viewed in connexion with the numerous Scriptures which prove the future existence of the soul and the facts of our mental constitution and experience, sufficient to place the doctrine of the conscious existence and activity of the Spirit after death within the sphere of an intelligent faith. We hold then, not as the shadowy dreams of conjecture, but as the conviction of a Scriptural belief, that the Spirits of just men made perfect, not only live in a disembodied state, but in a state of earnest wakefulness and action. They are not like the chrysalis, living without sensation or motion, waiting for a resuscitation into a new and higher life; but like the imperial bird, bounding with ever-rising impulses and ever-renewing energy, and soaring on their pinions farther and farther away from the gross and the cloudy, into the sunny azure of immensity.

Another fact which this passage teaches concerning disembodied Spirits is :—

II. THAT THEY CONSCIOUSLY LIVE IN A MORALLY PERFECT STATE. They are the Spirits of “just men made perfect.” The little word “just,” has a most comprehensive meaning ;—it represents moral excellence in its utmost amplitude. All the duties devolving on responsible beings may be reduced to one of the shortest of sentences, “*Be just.*” Be just to yourself ; respect your own rights, train your own faculties, work out your own powers, and reach your own destiny ; be just to other creatures, respect the natures and rights of all animal existences ; honour all men ; love the brotherhood ; claim from others only what you are ready and willing to render to them ; regard all men as the offspring of a common father, involved in a common ruin, dependant upon a common salvation, and destined to meet at a common judgment. Be just to God. The greatest being reverence the most ; the holiest being love with the highest affection ; and the kindest being praise with the greatest ardour and constancy. This is the totality of holiness.

How came these men to be “just” ? Were they always so ? Like the unfallen angels, did they retain intact all the virtuous impulses and principles with which they commenced their being ? No ! Like all descendants of Adam, they were participators of a common depravity and guilt. They were sinners like all the rest. How then did they become just ? The text tells us they were “*made perfect.*” How ? Yes, how ? From the beginning there has been but one way, and that is faith in Christ. All men, since the fall, that ever have been just, have become righteous through Christ—righteous in the sight of God through His atonement—righteous in heart and character through belief in His doctrines, imitation of His example and participation of His Spirit. He is made unto us “righteousness.” Do you, in imagination, look up to those

Spirits of "just men," as they move amidst the splendours and blessedness of the Celestial world, and ask "Whence came they?" The answer is at hand. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Blessed be God! there is a redemptive system on this earth,—a system for making unjust men just, and imperfect men perfect. There is a fountain fresh and free for the washing away of sin and uncleanness; a fire, which divine love has kindled to burn up the elements of depravity, and to transmute every thing in the human soul into its own pure character. Have you, my Friend, brought your Spirit to the cleansing stream? Has the fire of Evangelical Truth been kindled in your heart?

Another fact which this passage teaches, concerning disembodied Spirits is :—

III. THAT THEY CONSCIOUSLY LIVE IN A GLORIOUSLY SOCIAL STATE. They are in the City of the living God,—the heavenly Jerusalem,—the metropolis of the holy universe. There they mingle with "an innumerable company of angels,"—the myriads of lofty Spirits who retained their pristine holiness, and have been progressing, through unnumbered ages, in knowledge, power, and blessedness, under the radiant smiles of God. They are with the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven;—the first, not only in order of time, but in order, perhaps, of rank, of those who accepted the offers of mercy and were restored to fellowship with God. The Patriarchs, and Prophets, Confessors and Martyrs, who distinguished themselves by zeal and piety in the cause of truth, may properly be said to be amongst the "first born," whose names are enrolled as citizens of the Celestial world. They are with "God the judge of all;" they are in sweet and holy concert with him whose will is law, and on whose word hangs the destiny of all.—They are with Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant. He is in their midst, as the Lamb that

had been slain ; the object of their love, the spirit of their activities, and the theme of their song. What an association is this ! How unlike the society of earth is theirs ! No error throws its shadow on the intellect of any. Each Spirit catches the rays of the absolute truth and reflects them through the sphere in which it moves. There is no night there ; “neither candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light.” No pain distresses any heart. There is no sorrow nor crying. “God has wiped all tears away.” Every soul overflows with pleasure ; no event disturbs their harmony, or checks their progress, or darkens their prospects. “All things work together for their good.” No Serpent enters their Eden to seduce them from virtue. Death never appears in their mansions to violate the ties of their friendship and love. Blessed Spirits ! who would mourn their absence from a world like this ? They live in the free and healthy action of all their powers—powers refined and invigorated for the high services of eternity ; they live in the constant and delightful evolution of all their vast and varied sympathies and affections ; they live amid teeming hosts of Spirits, all of whom burn with the fires of love, and shine with the lights of truth ; they live in the conscious presence of infinite love, the life, and heaven, of the universe. “They are kings and priests unto God ;” they wear the crown, they inherit the kingdom that was prepared for them. How enchanting the landscapes that bloom around them ; how glorious the stars that sweep through their sky ! Their fields have no blight, their heavens no cloud, their balmy gales no storm.

Another fact which this passage teaches, concerning disembodied Spirits is :—

IV. THAT THEY CONSCIOUSLY LIVE IN A SPIRITUALLY ACCESSIBLE STATE. “We,” says the Apostle, “are come” to them. We, that is, Christians. How are we come to them ? Not, of course, in a *local* sense. We know not the *where* of their existence ; it may be distant or it may be

near; they may surround us as the atmosphere surrounds our globe, or they may be millions of leagues away. This, however, is of no practical importance to us. In the absence of personal holiness, local connexion with them would be a curse rather than a blessing:—a pure spirit would strike agony into a corrupt heart by contact. Place is not heaven. On the same spot and beneath the same star one Spirit may feel a joy unspeakable and full of glory, and the other a punishment too great to bear. It is in a Spiritual sense we come to them.

First: *We come to them in a loving memory of their histories.* Without figure we visit the loved ones, however distant, in memory. We feel our hearts brought close to them, as we remember the lovely features of their persons and their lives. Memory sets them before us, and we are made to see them, hear them, and feel their very touch. How often has the devotional saint been brought into the presence of David when perusing his Songs of Zion—the Theologian been brought into contact with Paul as he has pondered over his writings! What true Reformer has not met with Luther? What Poet has not felt the touch of Milton? Thus, we come, now, to those Spirits of the “just men made perfect,” in whose histories we feel aught of interest.

Secondly: *We come to them by appropriating their principles of action.* Morally, we come to a man as we adopt his principles of action,—assimilate to his character. Christianity enables us to attain the principles that govern and mould the Spirits of “just men made perfect.” Love to God, faith in Christ, sympathy with the good everywhere, self-consecration to truth;—these are their principles, and by adopting them we become “joined in one spirit,” and thus we follow them who, through faith and patience, are inheritors of the promise.

Thirdly: *We come to them, by a participation of the sources of their joy.* The true happiness of moral intelligences in all worlds, is derived from the same source,—the gracious

influences of the eternal, acting benignly upon all the susceptibilities and powers ; inbreathing evermore new life, and energy, and inspiration ; increasing their facilities for action, multiplying their objects of interest, brightening their vision, widening the sphere of their being, and raising them into a nearer approximation to Him, who is the fountain of life ; “in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Spirit can no more be happy without this influence, conscious presence, and favor, of God, than fields and forests bloom without a sun. Hence it is that the sainted Spirits above, and those below, meet at the same “living fountains,” participate of that one stream of blessedness which proceedeth from the throne of God. We come to them in every thrill of pleasure, in every train of happy thought, in every wave of joyous feeling.

Fourthly : *We come to them in earnest hope.* Hope often transports us into their presence now, and in imagination makes us one with them. How many have “passed into the skies” that we have known and loved ! Guardians of our childhood, friends of our youth, favourite authors and preachers, the noble-hearted brother, the loving and confiding sister, the devout father, and the mother whose love is a mystery of power, and whose memory is ever chanting old notes of music to the heart ;—these are some of our loved ones who are now amongst the “Spirits of just men made perfect.” When we think of them, do we not seem to meet and mingle ? Does not hope, on her golden wings, bear us upward to the blessed abode ? Yes, we feel that we are “Come to them.”—We breathe their air, it rolls through us in waves of new life ; their glorified forms flit before our vision, and their voices fall in touching music on our souls.

There are a few practical considerations arising out of this subject worthy of thoughtful remark.

(1.) *The worthlessness of all worldly and adventitious distinctions.* The distinctions of birth, titles, wealth, office,

which are always great things to men on earth, in proportion to their little-mindedness, are contemptible puerilities in the light of this subject. They are the trumpery toys of mental babes, which intellectual manhood scorns even here. They are not known above. They are but bubbles that rise on the little fussy brooks of time; they never appear on the majestic streams of eternity. Look above: are there any such distinctions amongst the Spirits of just men made perfect"? Are any of them known up there as millionaires, heroes, statesmen, earls, or kings? And yet they are amongst the most illustrious of God's creation;—they are kings and priests unto God. Aspire, my Brother, to those distinctions which are real, virtuous and lasting—the distinctions of deeper thoughts, broader sympathies, higher aspirations, nobler purposes, and more God-like strength and spirit. These are the only distinctions recognized yonder.

In the light of this subject we see:—

(2.) *The paltriness of religious sectarianism.* Who are those Spirits? How are they designated? As the Spirits of Catholics, Protestants, Church-men, Dissenters, Methodists, Baptists? No! these distinctions are not known above. They are only known as the "Spirits of JUST MEN." All those to whom the Apostle refers reached their Celestial home, ages before your current sects and denominations were known. They knew nothing of your Bishops and Priests, your "Convocations," your "Conferences," and "Unions." How small—miserably small, do the denominational discourses and ovations of denominational orators and heroes appear in the light of the fact, that the "general assembly of the first-born written in heaven" were saved, independent of all denominationalism;—and so have all that ever have been saved, and so must all that ever will. Has denominationalism ever saved a soul? Can it ever do so? Can it make an unjust Spirit "just," an imperfect Spirit "perfect"? No! emphatically, No! The mediatorial elements of truth can alone effect this. Denominationalism is

not religion ; it may serve its interest, or it may impede its progress, and even quench its life. I hail the day when the despicable views and feeling of little sects shall be lost in great ideas about the great things of God and man.

In the light of this subject we see :—

(3.) *The infinite value of Christ's office.* Who conducted these spirits to heaven? Who gave them a *title* to that glorious inheritance,—appeased the justice that had barred the gate of Eden, and doomed them to eternal death? Who gave them a *nature* fitted to that blessed state, cleansed away their defilement, and made them “pure in heart”? Who guided them thither, lead them through the wilderness intricacies, and perils, of life, into illustrious scenes of rest? There is but ONE, who did or could—“The Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.” You may point to various men in history, who have helped some portions of their race from disease to health, from ignorance to knowledge, from barbarism to a material civilization, from political slavery to liberty ; but history knows of but ONE, who has ever made an unjust “Spirit” “just,” an imperfect “Spirit” perfect ;—who has ever conducted one of the human race from the corruptions and miseries of this world to the purity and felicities of those heavenly realms. There is but *one* mediator—the man Christ Jesus. He has thus brought “many Sons unto glory,” is bringing many now, and will bring millions more, in the ages that are to come. What a glorious work is His ! How infinitely valuable His function in the universe ! Who else can sustain His position?—Who else can do His work? Let Him be looked to as the only Saviour, by the generations that are to come, and let the Redeemed of all ages join the chorus never to end,—“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,” &c.

In the light of this subject we see :—

(4.) *The blessedness of death to the good.* Death ! Thou, whom the world calls King of Terrors, and feels to be such ;—the followers of Jesus need have no dread of Thee. All the power thou hast is over the body ; and over that, not long.

Thy fatal stroke on them, disimprisons their spirits, and thus enables them to flee away from the encumberances of matter and the depravities of the world, to a sphere of kindred spirits;—pure, free, and blessed. Why, then, mourn the departure of the good? or why, if *we* are good, look fearingly on the day of death?

“Death comes to take me where I long to be ;
One pang, and bright blooms the immortal flower.
Death comes to lead me from mortality,
To lands which know not one unhappy hour ;
I have a hope, a faith—from sorrow here
I’m led by death away—why should I start and fear ?

A change from woe to joy—from earth to heaven :
Death gives me this—it leads me calmly where
The souls that long ago from mine were riven
May meet again ! death answers many a prayer.
Bright day, shine on ! be glad : days brighter far
Are stretched before my eyes than those of mortals are !

The Pulpit in the Family:

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON THE CAREFULNESS WHICH CHRISTIANITY PROHIBITS.

“Be careful for nothing,” &c.—Phil. iv. 6.

THIS is one of a series of exhortations addressed by Paul to the Christians at Philippi, in order that, by obedience thereto, they might attain to the enjoyment of “the peace of God which passeth all understanding.” It is important, not only as preparatory and helpful to this result, but as describing the state of mind which every Christian should cherish. The object of the gospel is to establish the supremacy of the divine will. It requires the perfect subjection of man’s will to God’s. Its work is accomplished when we acquiesce in all the divine arrangements, and our desires are in harmony with the divine purposes—when we are “careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make our requests known unto God.”

It may serve to promote this desirable state of mind in some of our readers, if we attempt to explain and enforce the apostle’s exhortation. We notice—

I. WHAT THE EXHORTATION DOES NOT REQUIRE.

First: *It does not require, of course, that we should give no heed to our own actions.* He who is not careful in relation to what he does, has forfeited all right to the Christian name,—for he violates the plainest requirements of Christianity. The Antinomian, filled with the pride which goeth before destruction, and the haughty spirit which is the harbinger of a terrible fall, may talk of the little

importance which attaches to his conduct, since Christ has borne the penalty of all the sins which he may, or can, commit ; but not so the man who draws his inspiration and his directions from a book, which charges him to “abstain from all appearance of evil”—“to cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit”—to “be holy for God is holy” : and warns him, that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord,”—and that “into heaven nothing shall enter which defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie,”—but that “every man shall be rewarded according to his works.”

Secondly : *It does not require indifference as to our eternal welfare.* We are far from thinking, that religion consists in concern about one’s own soul. That is, at best, the uneasiness of the patient who is conscious of his disease,—favourable so far as it leads to the application of the remedy, but never to be confounded with health. But neither does the Bible require absolute self-forgetfulness in relation to higher interests. Despite the greatness of their names, they are neither sound Philosophers nor Scriptural Theologians, who inculcate a religion which thinks not of heaven and hell, or of the soul’s welfare. Earnestly as some of them plead for it, it is not in human nature to be content to be damned. The soul must first be assured of its own salvation, before it can rise to the highest degree of self-abnegation which has yet been attained. The Bible inculcates the loftiest virtue ; yet it presents future rewards and punishments as motives to effort. When I read such passages as, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life ;” “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne,” &c. ; I see that the sublime stoicism of which our Philosophers speak, is not to be looked for, and that so long as Christian men are *but* men, a regard to their future welfare will influence their life.

Thirdly : *It does not require*—albeit there is enough in the so-called religious world to make one suppose so—*it does not require that we should be unaffected by what happens to*

others. A callous disregard of the interest of our neighbours is most opposed to the genius of the gospel. What is Christianity, but to breathe the spirit, and to copy the example of Christ? And did not he give "himself a ransom for many"? Has he not charged us with the keeping of our brother, and taught us to recognize a brother in every man we meet? O marvellous phenomenon! A man, reputedly religious, who does not feel for his fellows, when religion requires us to "love our neighbours as ourselves,"—to "do unto others, as we would that others should do unto us"—to "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others!" It may be so. He may pass for religious now and here. But then and yonder, it will be found that "pure religion, and undefiled, is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." His religion will be of little avail if the judge can say to him, "inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these ye did it not to me."

We notice—

II. WHAT THE EXHORTATION FORBIDS.

First: *Harassing anxiety in relation to temporal circumstances.* Such anxiety, it should be remarked, is not occasioned by, or peculiar to, any one class of circumstances. It rather indicates a state of mind which never fails thus to manifest itself even in the most diverse conditions. In adversity, it peevishly bewails its hardships, in prosperity, it fearfully anticipates reverses. Amid poverty, it is anxious about the future, lest the scanty supply should fail; possessed of a little, it is feverishly eager to increase its store; with abundance, it fears the loss of its possessions. Or, if it find no occasion for anxiety in its own position, there is enough in that of others. To provide a competence for one's family—what a life-long battle many fight for this purpose! What anxious days and sleepless nights they spend! How health is shattered, how higher duties are neglected in consequence! And is not this as it should be? Would you

censure a man who cares for his own? What says my text? —“*Be careful for nothing.*” To leave a competence to your children is well enough if it can be done—better than to waste your property on yourself, or to rot like a sluggard in idleness—just as it is lawful enough to desire prosperity on your own account. But neither is of sufficient importance to warrant harassing anxiety, or mental distress. Tell us these are natural to man;—and we admit it. But though natural, they are not the less unchristian. They betoken a want of confidence in God—of faith in Christian truth. What? keep your mind constantly on the rack, that you may leave something to your family? Distress yourself because you cannot give them a competence? Why should you? It may be better that they should depend on their own industry—perhaps, better that they should feel some of the pinchings of want. Be anxious to procure wealth for yourselves? Allow your mind to be depressed with the fear of poverty? Why should you? To be rich is not the object of life; nor is it essential to happiness. The poorest man may usefully, aye, and happily, fulfil his course here, and enter heaven at last. The richest can no more. It is well to use the means by which you are likely to obtain the object of your wish; but having given a due share of attention to these, you should neither be too anxious for success, nor too concerned about failure. If God controuls all that concerns you, you succeed or fail only according to His appointment; nor can you either, except as He sees best. Having done your duty and acquainted Him with your desires, you may leave Him to ordain;—thankful that all your affairs are in the hands of one so mighty, so loving, and so wise.

Secondly: *Distrust or fearfulness in relation to God's cause.* We cannot conceive of a man being too desirous that God's cause should prosper; but we can conceive of his being too fearful lest it should not. Regarding it as the hope of humanity, as the source of all that is cheering in man's progress or bright in his prospects, and as identified

with the glory of God, his very zeal for its promotion may excite his fears, so that when events take place apparently unfavourable, he may anticipate disaster, and giving expression to his mis-givings become a prophet of evil. To such a man the text says,—Banish thy fears. Be not distrustful of God's power. Know, that however unfavourable the aspect of things, however pregnant with disaster, passing events may seem to you, God foresaw them all when He announced the coming triumph of His truth. They are all under His controul. His cause is in His own hand; and able is He to bring to pass all that He has promised. Only do thy duty towards it, and then make known thy desires unto God—thankful that He reigns, doing “according to His will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.”

Thirdly: *Not to multiply illustrations; we have only to add, that the exhortation forbids carefulness in relation to everything which being exclusively of divine appointment, man's doings cannot in any way effect or controul.* Whatever pertains to your own duty, you should be careful to do promptly and well. Whatever is exclusively of divine appointment should give you no concern. In that case you are only to make your request known unto God, and then receive with thankfulness what He ordains, assured that, that must be best—most conducive at once to the welfare of the creature and His own glory. “Be careful for nothing,” &c.

Having thus attempted its explanation, we proceed to show :—

III. WHY THIS EXHORTATION SHOULD BE OBEYED.

First: *The course of conduct here enjoined is becoming, when we consider our own ignorance and shortsightedness.* We know so little and see at so short a distance, that we are unqualified to form a correct estimate of the events which happen to us. We cannot, from their nature, judge of their issues; nor can we penetrate the future so as to per-

ceive their ultimate results. We can tell whether they are immediately pleasant or painful; but whether they shall be so in their remoter influence is beyond our ken. We are often disappointed—sometimes pleasantly, sometimes painfully. Events which seem to threaten nothing but pain yield much enjoyment; others which promise enjoyment occasion bitter grief. That which we feared,—how often has it proved a blessing?—that which we longed for, a curse? Calamitous occurrences, as we call them,—do they never prove advantageous? Fortunate occurrences,—have we never found them fraught with calamity? Congratulations are uttered many a time, when, did we see farther, we should use condolences; and as often do we condole when we might with reason congratulate. “All these things are against me,” said good old Jacob, just when all those things were most signally working together for his good. And how often have we, like him, begun to despond when, as the issue proved, we had the greatest reason to hope? Surely, such considerations are fitted to lessen our carefulness, and to induce us to wait with patience and confidence the evolution of God’s purposes. That accident which appears to you so inopportune, may yet prove to have been most profitable. That sickness which has brought you so low, may yet minister diviner health. That poverty which is so repulsive, may prove the means of enriching thee. That loss may issue in thy highest gain. That disappointment, which is so painful, may be most gratifying in its results. Fear not:—

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”

That gloomy cloud will yet unfold itself and shed on thee a brighter radiance. That darkness, so dense, is the herald of the dawn. If there be tears in the night, it is that you may have songs in the morning. Fear not. Trust in God—only trust in Him. “Be careful for nothing,” &c.

Secondly : *This course of conduct is becoming when it is considered that, with our utmost care, we cannot determine what shall befall us, where we shall be situated, or what shall be the conditions of our lot.* While diligence in any undertaking is a condition of success, and he who wishes to succeed will study to do his duty, we cannot by any amount of carefulness secure our wish. Think as you will, it is not in your power to add "one cubit to your stature," or to "make one hair either white or black." With all your anxiety about the future, can you tell what will happen to-morrow?—how its dangers may be avoided, or its necessities provided for? Could you pierce the veil of the future you might find a pretext for your carefulness;—but it is to no purpose when you know not what a day may bring forth. Man, in ignorance, may lay his plans, but God in sovereignty ordains : and if man's plans harmonize not with God's wise purpose they must fail. Abraham in Egypt, Joseph's brethren, Daniel's accusers, are instances from among many, which shew how futile is man's scheming when at variance with God's will. And have we not observed, in our own time, the exercise in a similar manner of an over-ruling providence? At the commencement of life you planned your course according to your own liking; but how soon were you constrained to deviate from it, by circumstances which you did not foresee, or could not controul, or which appeared to you at the time too trivial to be noticed! Let not the thought of this grieve thee. It is well that it should be so. Better that there should be a controuling providence, than that man should have his own way. Murmur not at that which must be. Fight not against necessity. Submit thyself to, and acquiesce in, the decrees of the Supreme. "Be careful for nothing." &c.

Thirdly : *This course of conduct is becoming, when we consider that by prayer we may enlist on our behalf God's all-sufficient power.* When we commit our way unto God, and, making known to him our requests, leave him to order

aright all that concerns us, he pledges himself to provide for us all needful good, and render all that befalls us, conducive to our welfare. And when his power is thus enlisted on our side, is it not enough to relieve us of all care? Surely he is strong enough to shield us from evil, and to supply our wants. When you see how he adorns the lily, and feeds the raven, and cares for the sparrow—how, from the seraph which soars and sings in his presence to the insect that flutters in the sunbeam, all creatures are dependant on his bounty—surely you cannot fear that he is unable to supply you with any real blessing, or to protect you from aught that might prove injurious. You cannot suppose that his power need be supplemented by your carefulness. He who made and upholds the worlds—surely he needs not your assistance in the performance of his work, nor need you have any fear that he will leave it undone. That eye, that glances throughout all space—that hand that measures the floods, and spans the skies, and grasps the winds—that finger whose touch originates the vast chain of sequences which constitutes the universe—that power that hangs the worlds in space, and keeps them there; surely these are enough to supply thy little wants and protect thy little interests. Only trust in God, and his power exerted on thy behalf will relieve thee of all care. It is true, disappointment may await thee—every wish may not be gratified; but be sure of this, that if disappointed it is well that it should be so. If thy wish be denied thee, it is because it would prove no blessing to thee, but a disguised curse. God *can* bestow what is best for thee, therefore, “Be careful for nothing.” &c.

Fourthly: *I only add, as a supplement to the foregoing consideration, that this course is becoming, because God's wisdom and love invite us to confide in him.* Why should you be careful? Do you know better than he? Can you judge more accurately of what is likely to prove conducive to your welfare? Can you suggest to him aught that his wisdom might fail to perceive? Will your carefulness enable

you to escape any evil which he knows not how to avert, or secure any good which he knows not how to bestow? Or if you cannot doubt his wisdom, do you mistrust his goodness? Is it that, though all-wise, you do not think him loving enough to be trusted with your temporal concerns?—or that he deems them too insignificant to be worthy of his regard? What! Does he not feed the smallest insect? Does he not open his hand and supply the wants of every living thing? “Consider the lilies how they grow,” &c. “Consider the ravens,” how “your heavenly Father feedeth them.” And are not his children better than they? If God care for the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, and the insect that crawls at your feet, “will he not much more care for you, O ye of little faith?” Have you been the object of his gracious purpose from eternity? Did he, in the fulness of time send his Son into the world to suffer and die for you? Was it for you the Saviour led a life of sorrow—that he passed through the mysterious scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary—that his heart was broken—that he died surrounded by his tormentors and under the hidings of God’s countenance? Has God redeemed you at such a costly price? Has He sent His spirit to work in you and create you anew? And after having done so much, does He cease to care for you now? “But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.” “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.”

M. S.

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological, remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

EIGHTEENTH SECTION.—*Matt.* vii. 28, 29; and viii. 1—4.
The World's Teacher and the World's Healer.

(Continued from p. 248.)

OUR last discourse, under this head, was taken up with thoughts on Christ, as the WORLD'S TEACHER. We noticed His three classes of attributes as a teacher. Those which *cannot be imitated*; such as His originality, miraculousness, and authority. Those which *must not be imitated*;—such as His positiveness, self-assurance, and self-representation. And those which *should be imitated*;—of these we mentioned His naturalness, suggestiveness and catholicity. There are a few more of these which deserve a brief notice:—

Fourthly: *His Spirituality as a Teacher should be imitated.* He was ever impressed with the paramount importance of spirit. Matter, to Him, even in its most magnificent and imposing forms, was nothing in comparison with mind. Worlds seemed to pass into empty shadows, as He dwelt upon the value of souls. Hence He never sought to awaken the animal sympathies, nor please the sensuous part of His

audience. He was ever appealing to the inner spirit—the moral sympathies—the conscience. He taught that the Object of worship was a SPIRIT, and that true worship was not a formal service, but a spiritual devotion. He taught that religion was not in overt acts, but in hidden principles.—Not in the outward propriety of the Pharisee, but in the inner penitence of the Publican. He did not prescribe rules for the external conduct, but inculcated principles to govern thoughts and control emotions. He directed His hearers to holy principles, purposes, and spiritual habits, as the true riches; and warned them against labouring mainly for worldly wealth. He was a Spiritual Teacher. The God, the wealth, the kingdom, the honor, and the happiness, He spoke of, were all spiritual. His words were “spirit and life.”

Fifthly: *His tenderness as a Teacher should be imitated.* His treatment of the woman taken in adultery; His tears at the grave of Lazarus; His pathetic lament over Jerusalem; His last conversation with His disciples; His gracious notice of Peter on His first meeting with him after the denial; His prayers; and His address to His mother on the cross; are a few examples of his exquisite tenderness. His tenderness was not the simpering of an effeminate nature,—it was the nerve of a mighty mind who looked into the heart of things, having the deep consciousness of its solemn and strange relations. It could roll the thunders of faithful rebuke as well as breathe the words of soothing sympathy and hope. His tenderness was as the sap of oak,—the strength of his nature. His tear was the exudation of moral force. Let all teachers imitate the Great Teacher in this. Tenderness is the soul of eloquence; it tunes the voice into music; it breathes our thoughts into the hearts of our hearers, and makes them one with us.

Sixthly: *His faithfulness as a Teacher should be imitated.* Though poor, friendless, despised, and persecuted, He stands erect before the greatest men of His age;—confronts them, and spares them not. He takes off their mask and brings out into the light their long hidden sins. The voice which

whispered in accents of love to His disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled," resounded in thunder elsewhere. He had no soft and courtly forms of speech for the respectables of his country—the Pharisees, the Scribes, the Lawyers, the Priests, the Rulers. Without mincing, in broad vernacular, and with the emphasis of honest indignation, He told them what they were;—"a wicked generation;" "whited sepulchres;" "hypocrites;" "blind guides;" "fools;" "serpents;" and "vipers." He treated pretence as infamy; seeming sanctity, as a damning crime. Oh! for this faithfulness in teachers now! Do we not want more of the ring of honesty, and the withering flash of out-spoken faithfulness in the ministry of this artificial and soft-tongued age?

Seventhly: *His consistency as a Teacher should be imitated.* His doctrines were drawn out in living character. He exemplified the spirit He inculcated, He embodied the truths He taught; His life illustrated, confirmed, and enforced, His language. *He was truth*;—breathing, living, speaking, acting, truth. This consistency is an element of power which every teacher should devoutly and habitually seek.

Eighthly: *His devoutness as a Teacher should be imitated.* Christ was ever full of the great idea of God, and, therefore, ever full of the spirit of prayer and worship. Frequently do we find Him withdrawing into some secluded spot,—to a "mountain," to a "solitary place," to "a desert place," to "a garden," to pray. He felt the eternal Father ever with Him; encircling, nay filling, the whole sphere of His being,—sunning and warming the entire atmosphere of His soul. He always spoke as in sight of God, and always spoke, therefore, with the unction of devotion. Herein is speaking power. Sermons are mere intellectual productions until they are bathed in the life-giving current of devout emotions. Ideas become instinct with life as the soul grows prayerful. It is the *felt* idea of God alone that gives life, energy, unity, to all the parts of a sermon.

We have now to direct your attention to Christ, as He appears in another character, namely, that of

THE WORLD'S HEALER.

It would seem, from chapter iv. verses 23, 24, that Jesus had effected numerous extraordinary cures,—“healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people,”—prior to the cure of the “leper,” recorded in the passage now under notice. But the case of this leper is the first miraculous cure which Matthew narrates in detail. Jesus had now finished His Sermon on the Mount. That sermon had evidently made a powerful impression upon the listening assembly; for “as He came down from the mountain great multitudes followed Him.” His thoughts had polarized their hearts, and so long as the new impressions lasted, they were drawn after Him as by a magnetic force. The “leper” came within this new and mystic circle of influence, felt the attractions of Christ, approached Him, “and worshipped Him, saying, Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”

We shall look at Christ healing the leper as an illustration of *His healing souls*. There are three reasons which justify us in turning it to this use. (1.) Because physical evils in man are the effects and emblems of spiritual. We do not say that the particular evils of any given individual arise from his particular sins; but that the physical evils of all have moral evils as their roots. Human suffering springs from human sin. These physical evils, moreover, are not only effects, but emblems. Diseases of the body *represent* the diseases of the mind. Blindness, deafness, debility, pain, are the body's portraits of the soul's woe. (2.) Because Christ's physical cures were generally effected on spiritual conditions and for spiritual ends. As a rule, Christ required the patient to have faith in Himself before He performed the cure. He generally gave the mind an impulse

before He touched the body ; and moreover, spiritual good was the manifest design of all His physical cures. He sought to win the soul through kindness done to the body ; and He often did so. (3.) Because Christ's physical cures are admirably suited to represent His healing of souls ; and assuming, what we are far from believing, that they were not *intended* for this purpose, their wonderful adaptedness justifies us in thus using them.

The passage, looked at in this aspect, suggests four remarks in relation to Christ's curative power :—

I. HIS CURATIVE POWER IS EQUAL TO THE WORST CASES OF HUMAN DISEASE. Amongst the physical ills which afflict humanity, perhaps that of leprosy may be regarded as the very worst. It covers the body from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot with disgusting pustules ; it roots itself into the system, and is seldom eradicated ; it is transmitted from sire to son, through many generations ; it debilitates the whole system, and produces a most oppressive sense of prostration. Sometimes it is so virulent that it mutilates the body and separates the joints and the limbs. It makes the wretched victim repulsive to society, so that his nearest relatives and friends shun him with disgust ; and it renders his mind restless, gloomy, desponding, so that his "soul chooseth strangling rather than life." But malignant as is this disease, it does not surpass the curative power of Christ. This poor leper came to Him having, perhaps, the malady upon him in its most virulent form and offensive aspects ; and Christ had only to say, "I will, be thou clean ; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

Let this leprosy stand as a picture of sin in its most aggravated forms ; let the leper be taken as the type of the "chief of sinners," and the glorious truth illustrated is, "HE IS ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTMOST." What a glorious word is this "utmost"! Who shall gauge its dimensions ? *It compasses all sins.* Whatever their class, whether

of omission or commission,—of ignorance or knowledge,—against the teachings of nature or the spirit and provision of the gospel; whatever their degrees of enormity, and whatever their number; though they be more heinous than those connected with the infernal deeds of Calvary, and more numerous than the sands on ocean's wide-spread shores, this word “uttermost” stretches beyond them all, covers them all, and has ample room for more. *It compasses all periods of life.* It extends over all the years of our mortal existence, and touches the last moment of our probationary career. It takes hold upon the dying thief and rescues him, just as the pendulum of life was making its last vibration on the side of time, and as the deathless soul was about sinking into the flames. Zaccheus, the rapacious tax-gatherer; Peter, the lying blasphemer; the converts on the day of Pentecost—men who had imbrued their hands in the blood of Jesus; Saul, the infuriated persecutor; and the proverbially dissolute and depraved Corinthians;—all, and myriads now on earth, and millions more in heaven, attest the Almighty energy of the Son of God to heal the worst diseases of the soul. “He is mighty to save.”—HE IS MIGHTY TO SAVE. Hosanna !

II. HIS CURATIVE EFFICACY HAS ITS SOURCE IN HIS OWN WILL. “I will, be thou clean.” “I WILL.” This is the fiat of omnipotence;—the fontal force, the spring of all the impulses and movements in the creation, but those of sin. This is the ultimate reason of things; the final resting-place of logic and love.

In order to see the greatness of Christ's *will*, look at it for a moment in connexion with ours. We have all a will. We can all say “I will;” we do say so; and by saying so with earnestness, we often effect something of more or less importance. But, the “I WILL” of Christ is different from ours.

First: *His will can act without any instrumentality, ours*

cannot. We may *will* hundreds of things, but there is not one thing that we can do simply by willing. We must employ means—we must work by instrumentalities. The body itself is but a system of instrumentality by which we give effect to our volitions. The curative power of other physicians is in the fitness of the means they employ, not in their will; their will, however resolute and earnest, has no effect whatever of itself. Not so with Christ. The curative virtue is in His will, and not in instrumentalities. He hushed the storm, healed the sick, and raised the dead, without any instrumentality at all:—simply by volition. In the following verses we have an account of His healing the servant of the Centurion, without ever touching or seeing him. There was Almightiness in His will. The whole universe is more thoroughly at the command of His will than our bodies are at the command of ours.

Secondly: *His will gives effectiveness to all instrumentality, ours cannot.* We not only cannot do anything without instrumentality, but we can do nothing, even with the most right and fitting instrumentality, merely by our own will. His will is the effective force of all useful instrumentality. It is so in nature. The machinery employed for maintaining order in the universe, generating and sustaining life, watering the fields with rain, and warming them into beauty and fruitfulness with sunshine, is made effective by His will. His will is the spring of every wheel, the fructifying virtue of every sunbeam and shower. It is so in the spiritual system. Institutions fitted for usefulness; the most powerful books; the most evangelical sermons; the Bible itself, will never answer their end unless they have the “I WILL” of Christ. He quickens whom He *will*. Let us learn to look to His WILL as the fountain, pole, bond, and nerve of the universe. As the rule of our duty, and the source of our destiny.

III. HIS CURATIVE SUCCESS REQUIRES THE MENTAL ACTION OF THE SUFFERER. The leper now approached and entreated

Christ with a resolute and earnest will. Perhaps most, if not all, the cases of healing which we have recorded of Christ, followed the mental action of the sufferer, as a condition. It is true, that this does not always appear. In the case, for example, of the Centurion's servant, recorded in the following verses, it is not stated that he had any feeling or will concerning Christ; but then it must be remembered that he did not apply to Christ in person. His master was the applicant, and the probability is that his master applied not merely with his concurrence but *by his request*. The same may be said of other cases. The woman who had been diseased for twelve years received the curative virtue, after an act of resolute and earnest will in pressing through the multitude to touch the hem of His garment. The two blind men on the road side received their sight, after they had made a most importunate appeal to Christ.

One might ask, why did Christ so frequently, if not always, make His cures dependent upon the state of the sufferers' mind? Was it because the producing of a certain mental state was necessary as means to an end? That such is the connexion between soul and body, that the recovery of a patient is oftentimes greatly dependent upon the state of mind that can be produced, is a physiological fact. Strong faith in the ability of a physician has often done what no medicine could accomplish. But since Christ can effect His purpose independent of means, we are not disposed to regard this as a reason. Our view rather is, that it was intended to adumbrate the great truth, *that an earnest will directed to Christ is an essential condition of spiritual healing*.

The great law of spiritual healing is this: no soul can be cured of the malady of sin, either against its will or without its will, or even by its will directed to any object for the purpose, but by Christ. The afflicted soul must come to Christ as did the leper now. Do you ask, why souls are not healed? Not (1.) because Christ has not willed their restoration. In the mission He undertook, the suffering He en-

dured, in the provision He has made, in the invitation He has given, I hear him say to the diseased world in language most unequivocal, and in emphasis most thrilling, "I will, be thou clean." His will is the instinct—the fiat of a world-wide philanthropy. Nor (2.) because Christ has willed an impracticable mental act on man's part as a condition. He has not only willed that men should be morally cured, but that they should be morally cured in connexion with their own free and earnest application to Him. And whilst we would not presume to say that he could not heal souls without this condition, we do say, that we cannot see the possibility of His doing so. But is the condition *impracticable*? Has not man the natural power; and has he not in the gospel all the means and motives to excite him to this earnest application to Christ?

IV. HIS CURATIVE RESULTS WILL BEAR THE SCRUTINY OF HIS MOST INTELLIGENT AND INVETERATE ENEMIES. "See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the Priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." The reason for this injunction was, obviously, that the Priests, the recognized authorities in such cases, should attest the validity of the cure. When they had done so, there would be no further room for doubt on the subject. It is true, that other purposes were served by this injunction. It served (1.) to show the unostentatiousness of Christ in all His doings. He did not wish the leper to trumpet the healing marvel abroad among the multitude, to awaken their applause. He made no parade of His doings; He did not cause His voice to be heard in the streets. It served to show (2.) That the reception of a special mercy from heaven requires solitude. If the leper had mingled at once with the multitude, the impression which such a favor made upon the mind, would have been speedily eradicated. Solitude is the scene for nursing impressions into virtuous principles. It served to show (3.)

that He had no desire to invade the rights, or enjoy the immunities, of any human office. Go to the Priest—he is regarded as an authority; get his judgment; but in doing so, render to him what he considers, and what society considers, his rights; “offer the gifts that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.”

But whilst such purposes as these were answered by this injunction, the design was evidently *to prevent any suspicion as to the validity of the cure, by having the attestation of those recognized authorities, who were enemies to Him.*

Christ's moral cures will bear the test of the most shrewd, enlightened, and inveterate, enemies. Saul of Tarsus, Bunyan of Bedford, Newton of Olney, are types of the millions that Jesus has cured of the leprosy of sin. Who amongst the most determined foes of the Christian scheme can gainsay the validity of such cures? And are they not the most cogent and decisive proofs of the power, mercy, and divinity, of Jesus?

Extracts from RUDOLF STIER'S “Words of the Lord Jesus,” illustrative of the preceeding article.

“He touches him (the leper) as Elijah and Elisha touched the dead, without defilement. The words and deeds are one,—an immediate moment of most immediate *answer*. Alas! the majestic utterance may not be fully rendered into our tongue, as the three evangelists unanimously preserve it, in those two only words so full of grace and authority :—*θέλω, καθάρισθαι*.”

“In this manner never prophet before Him healed; and He who thus speaks, speaks only in the power of God—who speaketh and it is done. An imperative this which human language had never known before.”

“‘Tell no man,’ go thy way instantly, that if possible the fame of what has taken place may not outstrip thee, and give occasion to the evil disposed to interpret my act of power into an invasion of their office.”

“‘Show thyself to the priest.’ We must further guard against the error of many well meaning persons (who are here unconsciously following Roman Catholic precedents,) in interpreting this commandment to show himself to the priest, as referring to our present spiritual guides, who must suspect and sit in judgment upon souls.”

Gems of Thought.

SUBJECT:—*The Difference between Christ's Estimation of His Departure from this World and Paul's, in Relation to Usefulness.*

"It is expedient for you that I go away." Jesus.—John xvi. 7.

"Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Paul.—Phil. i. 24.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-eighth.

Between Jesus and Paul, when each uttered his words before us, there was a remarkable correspondence:—

First: *Both were in the immediate prospect of Death.* The words of Christ were a part of that tender and consolatory address which He delivered to His disciples in the immediate prospect of death. They were, no doubt, full of sadness at the thought of being separated from Him who had changed the whole current of their sympathies and thoughts, introduced a new and glorious era into their experience, and with whom they had mingled on terms of the most endearing friendship for at least three years. He knew their distress, and condescends in this conversation with them, on the night before his death, to administer the necessary relief. Every sentence is charged with consolation. The expression before us is a sample of the whole. He assures them that it was expedient for them that He should depart, in order to prepare a place for them, and bestow upon them a Comforter, that should not only be with them, but *in* them; and that, not for a season, but for ever.

The words of Paul are part of an address, which he directed to the Philippian Christians when he was in the immediate prospect of being separated from them by a cruel and an ignominious death. Death, in forms of horrid torture, was before the eye and heart, both of Jesus and Paul, when they uttered the sentences before us. Both are the expressions of those about to grapple with "the King of Terrors," and step into the mysterious scenes of disembodied Spirits.

Secondly: *Both were under the master influence of the same principle of self-sacrificing philanthropy.* The strongest desire of Christ when He spoke, was the good of those to whom He addressed Himself; and this was also the strongest desire of Paul. Both wished well to their race; both were supremely anxious to serve it.

Now the remarkable point to which I wish to draw your attention is this, that Jesus should regard His departure from the world as necessary to serve the interests of His disciples, and that Paul should regard his continuance in the world as the most necessary to serve the interest of his converts. Jesus considered His death, so far as the good of the Church was concerned, highly expedient; Paul, on the other hand, considered his death inexpedient for the Church. The one thought that He could do more good by going to heaven; the other thought that he could do more good by remaining on earth.

Now we think that an enquiry into the cause of this difference of judgment between Christ and Paul, concerning usefulness, will not only be interesting but profitable. We assume, of course, at the outset, that both were correct in their judgments;—it would be blasphemy to suppose that the Mediator had not formed a true judgment, nor would it be much else to suppose that the apostle had not,—since he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. Why then should it be better for the world for Christ to depart, and for Paul to remain?

We suggest two reasons:—

I. BECAUSE THE CHURCH WOULD LOSE LESS BY THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST, THAN IT WOULD BY THE DEPARTURE OF THE APOSTLE. There are three things which the Church probably lost by the departure of the Apostle, which it did not lose by the departure of Christ.

First: *His personal presence.* When the Apostle departed this life, it is probable that his person left all the scenes of his mortal life,—so that he had no more connexion with the earthly affairs of mankind. At any rate, the Bible does not give us any reason to believe, that, after death, a man continues in any personal connexion with this terrestrial state. He passes away to some other world. He returns no more to his house. “His sons come to honour, and he knows it not.” The places that once knew him, know him no more for ever. The world loses him. Paul, after his departure, would not be found at Corinth, or Rome, or Ephesus, or Philippi, or with any of the Churches, which he had planted. But it is not so with Christ. Death did not take Him from the world. He was present after His decease, as before. “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.” Christ is personally with every section of His Church—with every disciple. “I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

Secondly: *His personal agency.* After Paul's decease, not only was his person absent from this world, but, of course, his personal agency. He wrote no more letters; his tongue pronounced no more addresses. His pen was still, and his voice was hushed on earth for ever. When we die, we finish our personal agency. We leave our work, we return not to complete any undertaking,—not to finish even the education of our children. We leave the work for ever when we die. But it is not so with Christ. He continued to carry on His designs; He worked in His disciples “to will and to do of His own good pleasure.” The Acts of the Apostles are the acts of Christ through the Apostles; and all the true achievements of the Church are but the operations of Christ.

Thirdly: *His intercession*. The Apostle, during his mission on earth, prayed earnestly and constantly for the Church;—he “prayed always with all prayer.” But when he died, perhaps, this intercession ended. We say *perhaps*—for it does not behove us to speak positively here. Indeed, reason would suggest that intercession is the act of all holy souls; and that those for whom we interceded in earnestness here, we shall remember in our aspirations in the heavenly state. The Bible, however, gives us no authority for believing this, and, therefore, it is, at any rate, a matter of doubt. But the intercession of Christ continues. That is a beautiful Prayer in the Seventeenth chapter of John; but it is only a short specimen of His intercession for the Church in the heavenly world. “He ever liveth to make intercession.” “If any man sin,” &c.

“Kind intercessor! there he sits,
And waits, and pleads, and prays.”

II. BECAUSE THE CHURCH WOULD GAIN MORE BY THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST, THAN BY THE DEPARTURE OF PAUL. The Church would gain more of three things by the departure of Christ, than by the departure of the Apostle.

First: *More sanctifying truth*. I know not of any truth that came out in Paul’s death, that you have not in his life and teaching. But oh! what a new flood of truth burst upon this world when Christ died, and rose from the dead! Indeed, these facts involved the very essence of the gospel. What is the gospel? Let Paul tell you. (1 Cor. xv. 1-4.) Here is the renovating and sanctifying power of truth.

Secondly: *More heavenly attraction*. The departure of Paul, indeed, increased the attraction of the heavenly world. The members of the various Churches who knew Paul, and heard him preach, would assuredly feel drawn toward heaven by his departure. The death of the good has this power. The celestial world comes with meaning and uplifting power to us, when we think of it as the home of

all the great and good men whom we have known and loved. But how little is this attraction compared with the attraction which flows from Christ. Christ in Heaven is the magnet which draws the heart Heaven-ward.

Thirdly : *More secure guardianship.* Were we to suppose what some hold, that the departed Spirits of the good, who loved us most, become our guardian angels ; yet, what is their guardianship compared with a guardianship secured to us by Christ, in consequence of His departure to the other world ? "All power," said He, "is given to me." All things are under His control ;—all elements, laws, beings, agencies, actions, worlds, systems, matter, mind. "Things, visible," &c. "He is head over all things to the Church," &c.

Fourthly : *More divine influence.* "Power from on high." What a new tide of moral influence came down on the day of Pentecost !

The subject teaches :—

(1.) That our privileges are superior to the privileges of those who were the contemporaries of Christ. Peter grew wonderfully in moral energy by the departure of Christ. How weak in "the high priest's house" when Christ was present ; (Luke xxii. 54-62.) How strong when confronting the Sanhedrim a few days after Christ's departure ! (Acts iv. 5-12.)

The subject teaches :—

(2.) That earth is the sphere in which we can best serve our race. Paul felt this. Whatever you desire to do in the way of spiritually improving your children, servants, neighbours, &c., must be done *now*.

The subject teaches :—

(3.) That the death of the good is a real loss to the world. The death of a good man is the drying-up of another well-spring in the desert of life.

SUBJECT :—*Jesus and the Ruffian Band in Gethsemane ; or, the Majesty and force of Right.*

“Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye ? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth,” &c.—John xviii. 4-8.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Forty-ninth.

It is, perhaps, noteworthy, that John is the only Evangelist that records this incident of a band of men approaching Christ, and at His words falling “backward.” It is true that he omits other circumstances connected with this memorable night, which the other biographers distinctly record ; but here he records a most suggestive circumstance which they had overlooked. I cannot see how this difference in the narrations of Christ’s biographers can, in any just way, be regarded as invalidating the testimony of either. It seems to me to give an air of naturalness and reality to the statements of all. Fabricators of a history would never have acted thus ; they would have been studious in their endeavours to make their respective testimonies agree, not only in their essence, but also in their accidents. Indeed, had there been this uniformity, there would have been reason for suspecting their veracity. Many, if not most, of the events of Christ’s life occurred in connexion with turbulent multitudes and immense excitement. Under such circumstances it would have been almost impossible for the observers to detail the same events ;—to say nothing of their detailing them in the same order. From the nature of the case, each would have a stand-point peculiar to himself, would be struck with a circumstance which the other would not have an opportunity of observing, and be in a position to receive a deeper impression from some incident which the other, perhaps, would scarcely deem worthy of note. Hence this *formal* diversity would almost, necessarily, take place in the honest statements of independent and trust-worthy witnesses.

Gethsemane, a little garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives, a short distance from Jerusalem, to the South, is the scene of this occurrence. Thither Jesus had retired; there, overshadowed by the silent hills, amidst the deep hush of midnight, with the pale rays of the full moon falling coldly on His brow, He passes into a mysterious agony of soul and pours out His heart in prayer. "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples;" but this is the last visit, and He is awfully alive to the solemnity of the occasion. It is with Him "the hour of darkness." Although His soul is in a cloudy, stormy, universe of terrible abstractions, all is quiet for a time, and nothing is heard, perhaps, but the sighing of the night-wind amongst the trees and the murmurings of Cedron's little brook. At length, however, the outward silence is broken. "Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief Priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns," &c.

Josephus informs us, that at the time of the passover, which was now, great multitudes assembled at Jerusalem from different parts of the country to celebrate the festival; and that a band of Roman Soldiers were placed at the porches of the Temple to repress any tumult that might arise. This body was at the disposal of the Chief Priests, and those base men were only too glad to lend these soldiers to Judas, in order to arrest Christ. These soldiers are a type of all soldiers. They sell themselves, they become the instruments of their masters, they move like machines at the bidding of their superiors. Poor deluded and debased creatures! They act not from individual conviction; the command of their superior is the standard of obligation; they will even crucify a Christ, if their masters command them so to do.

This is one of those little fragments of Gospel History which often unlock to the reflective soul a fresh realm of profitable thought. Each little incident in Christ's bic-

graphy, like each star, has a light to reveal a sphere peculiar to itself.

This incident seems to illustrate two things :—

I. THE MORAL MAJESTY OF RIGHT. This is seen in two particulars.

First: *In the heroic manner in which Christ, single-handedly, met his enemies.* Jesus, instead of fleeing from their presence, or manifesting the slightest perturbation, goes forth magnanimously to meet them; and looking them, perhaps, directly in the face, says, "Whom seek ye?" "What great offender are you in search of, at this late hour of the night?" "Jesus of Nazareth," said they;—a name of reproach. As if they had said, We are in search of that infamous Carpenter's Son, from Nazareth; that blasphemer, who is representing Himself as the Son of God and the true Messiah—we want "Jesus of Nazareth." What was the reply? Did Christ, in any way, attempt to evade them? No! "I am He," said He. I shrink not from that name, though clothed with obloquy, though the object of imprecation with priests and populace. I am neither ashamed of my abused name nor of Nazareth, my humble home. "I am He." I shun not my past history; I am ready to have it scrutinized in open day. I, Jesus of Nazareth, have been in poverty, but never in disgrace; despised, but never depraved; assailed, by the tempter, but never incited to sin.

His moral majesty is seen—

Secondly: *In the tender consideration which he displays for his friends, under the most trying circumstances.* "If ye seek me," said He, "let these go their way." As if He had said, Whatever injury you are going to inflict on me, save them, though they have neglected me, and "could not watch with me one hour." I would not have them injured; and though I should like them to be with me in this hour of my trial to sustain me with their presence and their sympathy, yet for the sake of their safety I forego the gratifica-

tion ;—"let these go their way." Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. He forgets Himself in His disciples. Is there not moral sublimity here ? Who that has a soul within him does not see the highest moral majesty in Christ thus heroically meeting, single-handedly, His enemies, and seeking the safety of His unfaithful friends, at the moment when His own life was in the most imminent peril ?

The question which here comes up, and is worthy of a moment's thought is, what was it that made Jesus so calm and powerful in this terrible hour ? What is the philosophy of this majestic bearing ? (1.) It is not ignorance of His perilous position. Men are sometimes calm in the midst of dangers, because they are unconscious of their situation. But it was not so with Christ ; for we are told in the fourth verse, that He knew "all things that should come upon Him." All the horrible events which were now to crowd into a few short hours of His life passed distinctly under His vision. The hall of Caiaphas, the baseness of Herod and of Pilate, the maddened fury of the populace, the agonies of the cross—He knew all these things, and knew that they were all coming upon Him at once,—and yet He was calm. (2.) It is not stoical insensibility to His perilous position. The composure of some in trying circumstances is nothing but a stolid obduracy of heart. But it is not so with Christ. He was sensitiveness itself ; His soul was all nerve. What then is the cause ? It is the *consciousness of rectitude*. He knew that He was right with Himself, with the universe and God. And with this consciousness of rectitude, there can never be any moral forebodings or apprehensions as to the future : with this, the future is evermore bright and attractive ; and with this consciousness of rectitude, moreover, there is always an assurance of God's presence and favor. Hence Christ is represented in the Psalms as saying, "I have set the Lord alway before me ; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

This incident illustrates—

II. THE SOCIAL FORCE OF RIGHT. "As soon, then, as He said unto them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground." What was it that now struck them down? What was the force that laid prostrate these strong men on the ground? Was it miraculous force? We think not, for the following reasons:—

First: *Because the supposition does not agree with the general use of Christ's miraculous agency.* All the miracles of Christ were characterized by mercy. The destruction of the barren fig tree was the only exception. He did not employ His energy to injure but to bless.

Secondly: *Because this supposition is opposed to that general spirit of non-resistance which He constantly exemplified and inculcated.* We never find Him putting forth His hand to resist. He practised the principle, He enforced, of returning good for evil.

Thirdly: *Because this supposition is not necessary to account for the phenomenon.* We think that the divine and glorious bearing of Christ, when He approached them with His mighty words and piercing look, was quite sufficient to produce such a rush of violent emotion in their guilty spirits as would produce the effect here stated.

In support of this view think of three things:—

(1.) That violent and sudden emotions have always tended to check the current of life. It is a physiological fact, that sudden and extreme joy, or terror, has often paralyzed the physical organs and produced death. There are instances of culprits, who on receiving tidings of pardon under the gallows, have fallen dead in a moment, as if struck with a thunderbolt. Sudden and extreme terror produces the same effect* (2.) Think of the probable state of the minds of these men, when they entered the garden. They must have known and felt that they were doing wrong. Men, when they are engaged in wrong work are always timid—always disposed to be alarmed;—"Conscience makes cowards of us

* See "The Power of the Soul over the Body," by Dr. Moore.

all." The nocturnal burglar moves, you may be sure, to the door, with a tremulous step and timid soul. The faintest sound has often broken the purpose of the midnight robber and paralyzed the arm of the assassin. These men, perhaps, like all cowards, talked very bravely as they wended their way through the streets of Jerusalem and crossed the brook of Cedron; but, you may be sure there was a moral nervousness within. (3.) Think of the unexpected and morally dignified way in which Christ met them. They expected resistance—a terrible struggle, and hence they came with deadly implements. Had they met with resistance, they would have put forth resolution and stood; but instead of this, when He walked calmly up to them—spoke in kind and dignified tones to them, they were taken aback; they felt that there was Divinity there, and that there was a Spirit about the whole which roused their guilty souls. Shame, remorse, terror, foreboding, rushed up from the depths of their moral heart like a tempest, before which they fell. It was the force of right that struck them down.

This subject teaches :—

First : *The supreme importance of being right.* There is nothing of such moment to man, as rectitude. This gives value to every thing else. Apart from this—wealth, social influence, knowledge, and even life itself, are worthless. Our great want is, a "right spirit" within us. Nothing will enable us to meet the future, but this. There is a Gethsemane before us all; the last night of our existence will come, and foes will approach us then more formidable than those which now surround our soul. Would we, in that solemn moment be calm and firm? Then we must be made right.

Secondly : *The divine method of promoting right.* How are men to be made to feel its power? not by force and violence, but by a calm display of itself.

Thirdly : *The ultimate triumph of right.* The falling of these men before the moral majesty of Christ seems to prefigure what must one day be the case everywhere. The right

must conquer. *The right is might*—divine might: almightiness is with the right thought, act and life. The wrong cannot stand before it;—it must fall, as the colossal image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream fell at the touch of the little stone. The wrong in science, literature, governments, institutions, religions, must fall before the right.

Fourthly: *The folly of opposing the right.* Priests and princes may rise up against it; intrigue and violence, armies and navies, may be employed to put it down; but fruitless will prove all their efforts. The triumphal car of right must roll over the dust of the Herods, Caiaphases, Julians, and Neroes.

SUBJECT:—*Heresy: an Exposition and an Appeal.*

“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”—James v. 19-20.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fiftieth.

MEN may *think* falsely and live virtuously, or they may *live* immorally and think correctly. The one class are intellectual sinners, the other moral transgressors. They are to be judged by different standards, and so classified as not to be swept away in one common anathema. If error proceeds from sheer intellectual inability to see as the majority see, charity should be brought to bear in such a case, in all its power and tenderness; but if error proceeds from a putrid heart—if it is cherished because truth is too regardful of the conduct, and too restraining for the wildness of passion, then indignation may be excited, and consequences allowed to discharge their retributive fires.

The most pernicious of heresies, is the heresy of an immoral life. A defective creed may be the result of a thousand subtle causes, beyond the cognition of the keenest intellect; but a corrupt life can only be the offspring of a

rotten moral constitution. It is of vital importance to know, if possible, the *history* of a man's heresy before we pronounce him a leper, and avoid him as a pest. The wrong thinker is not to be branded with the iron of theological disgrace, and left in penal isolation, if he displays anxiety to avail himself of all possible light, and if his conduct is above the breath of impeachment. Such a man is to be treated with kindness; his yearnings should awaken sympathy, even though his conclusions should fail to secure concurrence. Not so with the man of immoral life; his is wilful badness—he likes the mire, and therefore wallows in it.

Keeping in view the distinction thus hinted at, let us learn truth and tenderness from the exhortation of James. His words imply :—

I. THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRUTH-POSSESSOR BECOMING A TRUTH-LOSER. “If any of you do err from the truth.” The assumption is, that once the erring one was safely enshrined in the palace, but that by some means he has lost himself in the complicated corridors and passages, and is unable to retrace his steps to the seat of comfort. Men may “err from the truth” from the following causes :—

First: *Through a daring, speculative, turn of thought.* They are apparently oblivious that there is a boundary beyond which they cannot pass and live. They forget that it is only in their own atmosphere that they can inhale life. And hence, darting upward on the wing of speculation, they are sickened, or scorched, or dazzled, in unaccustomed climes. Their mental eye-ball cannot bear the splendour of the higher suns, and their ear is deafened with the thunderburst of music from the loftier globes. Thought has its own appointed sphere. If it pass into other orbits, it may be captured as an intruder and slain as a spy, Let the speculator know, that in the universe there is still that mystic central tree, forbidden to man. The eye may look upon it, and the tongue may praise its tinted beauty and its clustering fruit; but the solemn words are written upon

every leaf, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We are not of those who would close the inquiring eye and bind the exploring wing; yet our duty is to warn the student that there are dangerous latitudes in every sea, and that many a gallant vessel has been shivered on the hidden rock.

Secondly: *Through want of sympathy in their intellectual difficulties.* The thoughtful Christian must meet with much to startle and perplex him, in grace and providence. In study, it may be, a new idea has dawned upon him; and though he cannot see it on every side, and cannot yet give fitting expression to the great thought that stirs his soul, yet he ventures to hint it to his companions in Christian fellowship; and if they do not get precisely the same view of it, they are too apt to cry *Heresy!* and to leave the struggler in lonely contest. This is cruelty. In the idea there may be nothing at variance with the hoariest orthodoxy, yet if not expressed with scholastic definiteness it may ruin the denominational reputation of the unfortunate thinker. A new idea is not to be coldly treated. Take the stranger in—some have thus entertained angels unawares—encourage it to speak; and if its speech be divine, fear not to re-echo it whoever may frown or curse. Many noble minds have been injured by the neglect of those on whose sympathy they had the strongest claims. It has too often seemed as though independent thought were a crime, and thus the discouraged and unrepresented student has been aroused to defiance and goaded to scepticism. Woe unto the church when honest thought and honest speech are repressed! When intellect is stagnant, its putrid effluvium may corrupt the heart's holiest feelings. Let us treat the honest thinker with Christian manliness. Though he may shock some old prejudice, the very convulsion may ventilate our being with the pure air of heaven. What a sense of isolation the Christian feels, when he has some great scheme in his breast which he dare not divulge under penalty of being pitied as an enthusiast, or despised as a fanatic!

Thirdly : *Through intellectual pride.* Some men are ever in minorities through a love of singularity. They falsely imagine it to be great-minded to differ from the mass. They confound impertinence with candour, and mistake rudeness for originality. Such men overlook the fundamental condition of all progress—receiving “the Kingdom of God as a little child.” We must leave our grey-hairs and our “experience,” (falsely so called) behind us, when we come to study the gospel ; and must drink in the pure word as the child imbibes the unadulterated milk. The intellectually proud fall into the mistake of confounding the province of reason with the province of faith. Their rationalism leads them from the sublime mysteries of redeeming love, into the cold abstractions of intellectual propositions. In their search after the underlying WHY, they deprive themselves of the ten thousand blessings which flow from a simple faith in the Lamb of God.

Such, are three of the many causes which lead men to “err from the truth.” It becomes us to “watch and pray,” that by the grace of God we may be preserved from the terrible issues of religious apostacy.

II. THE PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL OVERSIGHT IN SPIRITUAL LIFE IS RECOGNISED. “And one convert him.” Keeping up our original figure, the idea is that the “one” has noticed the vacant seat in the palace and has gone forth to bring the wanderer back to his society and his duties. This principle of mutual oversight is one of particular beauty, but liable to much abuse. The man who imperatively claims submission to his dogmas is a usurper ;—he is a tyrant without the tyrant’s power. Go to the erring one with a brother’s gentleness, and you may win his soul from destruction. The nearer he is to the edge of the precipice, the more caution is required on the part of those who have his interest at heart. If a committee or deputation begin to cry with stentorian voice, the man may be startled into the charm : but if the tender voice of love fall upon his ear, he may be

rescued from ruin. It requires much of the spirit of our divine Lord to go after the wanderer and to be successful in the reclamation of the prodigal. HE is the perfect type. Overflowing with love and guided by His own infinite wisdom, He knew when and how to address the vagrant sinner. Let us study HIM, if we would be wise in winning souls.

In what spirit should the church receive the returning errorist? With coldness, distrust, or indifference? Nay: if there be "joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," surely there should be thankfulness on the part of the church when the misguided thinker returns to the "old paths," and stands in the "good ways." (Jeremiah vi. 16.)

He who would convert the sinner, should study manner as well as matter, Personal contact alone is admissible. There should be no communication through a third party. In the presence of others the sinner may seek to defend himself, but when appealed to alone in the presence of God, he may unburden his heart; and while he sheds the penitential tear he may rise again to his ancient faith. (Matt. xviii. 15-17.)

In him who would convert "the sinner from the error of his way," there must be (1.) *Intense sympathy with Christ in the love of souls.* (2.) *A thorough acquaintance with the heart's deceitfulness:* this is necessary, that he may the more clearly trace out the causes of heresy and self-deception. And (3.) *an intelligent reverence for the established truths of religion.*

III. THE SALVATION OF THE SOUL IS THE SUBLIMEST OF MORAL TRIUMPHS. "Shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* What tears are deep enough and hot enough to weep over a dying soul? We can have no

* See Dr. Clark *in loco*, who discusses this expression with much clearness and simplicity.

adequate conception of such a spectacle. Language, with its mightiest efforts, fails in the description. *The man who rushes through the flame, or plunges into the sea, to save a body from death*, is applauded as a hero, or memorialized as a benefactor ; but it requires nothing short of God's own hands to place the crown on his head, who has been honoured in the conversion of a perishing soul !

The salvation of the sinner is thus sublime,—

First : *Because Christ deemed it worthy of his incarnation and sacrifice.* “God so loved the world,” &c. “Deliver from going down into the pit,” &c. If the salvation of the soul appeared so momentous a matter to the Son of God, we are not exaggerating its importance in designating it the grandest of moral victories.

Secondly : *Because the mission of God's spirit is thus fulfilled.* It is to “convince the world of sin”—to quicken the dead soul, and to re-enstamp the divine image on the heart. Father, Son, and Spirit, are alike glorified in the restoration of the fallen.

Thirdly : *Because the sum of moral goodness is augmented.* Salvation is not a mere negative. It leads from positive evil to positive goodness. Every soul, therefore, emancipated from the bondage of sin, is invested with all the freedom and glory of perfect holiness. One drop adds to the strength of the greatest billow. Satan's empire is thus lessened, and his power curtailed.

He who gives the mind an idea by which the great mission of life can be more effectually wrought out, is a benefactor ; and he who kindles that divine light by which the soul is conducted through earth-darkness to the day of heaven, is honoured by the Almighty in the accomplishment of the holiest work.

FRIENDS ! make it your business to woo the erring one. An angel's wing would not be soiled in flying towards the abode of the prodigal ; it is a divine errand : and while you run to fulfil it, the purest spirits may look on with joy !

Go, then, to the dungeon of moral darkness and shed the glory of the gospel ; force your perilous way down the dim avenue which is spotted with the profligate's blood, and entreat him to return. Carry with you the image of love, the tones of sympathy, and the tears of sorrow. Remember your own frail nature, lest ye, also, apostatise, and there be none to help. Let me charge you by the life, the agony, and the death, of your Divine Redeemer, to watch for your brother's salvation ! Might not the first-born seraphs in glory feel a fresh gush of joy in the penitence of the recreant soul ? Methinks that such a scene brightens the azure of the sky, tunes the breeze to the melody of thankfulness, and stirs in the heart of the great universe the pulse-beats of unutterable gladness ! An erring sinner repenting ! The artist may dash his pencil to the ground in despair,—for no genius can embody such a picture ; the poet may forsake his harp,—for such events are best celebrated with the eloquence of silence. And angels may hold their breath while the Divine Father embraces the returning son !

Banbury.

JOSEPH PARKER.

SUBJECT :—*The Divine Fruits of Faith.*

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”—Heb. xi. 1.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-first.

THE early Christians were in danger of abandoning the gospel, under the influence of motives supplied by ridicule, calumny, and persecution. The Apostle, as he is addressing Hebrews, adduces, from the Old Testament, bright examples of firm and happy adherence to the sublime principles of religion amidst bitter trials. He concentrates, in the definition of our text, the argument which he evolves in historic examples and proofs in the subsequent verses. He

here speaks of general faith in God. That faith has assumed, and may still assume, diverse forms. The *radical* form is faith in Christ;—a root, which ought to have numberless and wide-spreading branches. The text will enable us to see that the faith of the gospel, as the type and representative of all sound faith in God, could uphold the early Christians in their grand moral struggle, and will serve as a sure basis upon which the adherents of the good and holy in all ages may rear structures of God-like life and action. The safety of this basis will appear from the four ennobling principles indicated in the two parts of the Apostolic definition.

I. FAITH IS "THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR."

First: *Gospel-faith points to the future world.* The limitation of a man's plans and anticipations to things earthly and temporal debases his character; and that, among other ways, in the following most important manner. The present life exhibits, at least to the human eye, an absence of a proportionate combination of virtue and happiness. Hence an argument might be educed, which would materially damage our belief in an all-wise and all-good ruler, and so strike at the roots of godliness;—without which morality is essentially imperfect. This inference from the present life can be rebutted only by *faith*—faith in things hoped for,—in a future judgment, when every man shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body; and in a perfect and an eternal harmony of holiness and felicity. Now, the faith of the gospel furnishes that support from the future which virtuous emotion needs in its present activity.

Secondly: *Faith is "the substance," &c. i.e., it gives reality to things future.* The soul of man in all its operations, and especially in the fulfilment of duty, must be nourished by reality—facts, truths. If fed merely by fiction and falsehood, its strength withers away. Gospel-faith, when it has taken firm hold of the human heart, nourishes it by those future things of a holy and happy heaven, which it brings

before it with all the vividness and trustworthiness of present realities. Before these future things, thus clothed with reality, the sinful, or merely inferior, things of earth are stripped of their undue attractiveness. The scenes of time are overspread with the light of eternity. The future inspires the human heart with energy in its struggles against evil. Holy, joyful, anticipations foster love to the divine, and ensure a triumph over temptation, and even death. To the soul's capacity of looking forward to the future, and to its craving for the real, gospel-faith supplies divine food.

II. FAITH IS "THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN."

First: *Gospel faith deals with things unseen.* The attempt to limit human knowledge and action to things *seen* is not only unphilosophic and futile, but also ruinous to moral and spiritual health and progress. The tendencies of materialism in regard to science, ethics, politics, religion, are well known. Now, a supreme antagonism to these tendencies is to be found in gospel-faith. Perversions of Biblical instruction may often draw human attention exclusively to the external surface of the facts and institutions of the gospel; but true faith apprehends the unseen, spiritual, realities which underlie that material surface, and calls forth the highest faculties of the soul to grasp what is divinely great in the three realms of nature, providence, and grace.

Secondly: *Faith is "the evidence," &c., or a convincing argument* (ἐλεγχος) *in reference to things unseen.* The human soul, especially in the pursuit of the good, needs conviction, as the subjective correlate to objective reality. Vigour of moral action can only issue from firmness of intellect and heart. Now, gospel-faith invigorates the soul with convictions, which rest upon divine declarations, attested by external and internal evidences. And, moreover, in the regeneration of character, which springs from faith, its possessor has an argument for the truth of evangelic announcements about things unseen. He is convinced that faith is the very heart of his moral life, and he in-

instinctively clings to it with a tenacity which mere reasoning cannot conquer.

To the human soul's capacity of apprehending things unseen, and to its desire for well-grounded conviction, gospel-faith, we would again say, supplies divine food.

W. F. HURNDALL, M. A.

SUBJECT :—*The Privileges of the Good.*

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God ! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." &c. — 1 John, iii. 1-3.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-second.

These words teach us :—

I. THAT PRIVILEGES OF UNSPEAKABLE WORTH "NOW" BELONG TO THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST. "Now are we the sons of God." They had been in a state of degradation and darkness, and danger ; but were raised to a state of dignity and light, and salvation. They had been foes, but are made friends—had been aliens, but are now children ; and can look to the God of all grace as their father—can look to Jesus as their advocate and elder brother—to the Spirit as their teacher and sanctifier—to angels as fellow-worshippers of their own communion—to the assembly of the first-born as their fellow-citizens—to the church as their school, and to heaven as their home. They are *children*.

II. THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THESE HIGH PRIVILEGES, THEY ARE, WHILE IN THIS LOWER WORLD, SUBJECT TO TRIBULATION. "The world knoweth them not."—Knoweth not their spirit, their character, their dignity. First : "It knew HIM not."—Knew not the Author of their redemption, the Captain of their salvation, the High Priest of their profession, the Finisher of their faith. It knew Him not, though He came down from the throne of His glory to tabernacle among men ; though

He was full of light, and love, and grace, and truth ; though He was meek and lowly in heart ; though His teachings were those of truth and purity ; His tears those of pity ; His prayers those of faith and feeling ; and His miracles those of majesty and mercy ; though He sacrificed *Himself* to be the great propitiator, and conquered death and hell, and embalmed the tomb, and took possession of the keys, and ascended triumphantly to His throne ;—the world knew *Him* not. Secondly : It knew not the brightest and best of His followers. It knew not that lovely disciple who leaned on His bosom at the supper, but banished him to Patmos. It knew not the seraphic man who spent himself in making known the riches of Christ to the Gentiles. It knew not the holiest of their successors, but made them an army of martyrs. Therefore, the children of God, of our times, should not think it surprising that the world should disown, and despise, and degrade, *them* ; for it knows not their character, their principles, their motives, their griefs, their joys, their hopes, their dignity, their titles, and prospects.

III. THAT PRIVILEGES OF A HIGHER ORDER AWAIT THE CHILDREN OF GOD IN A FUTURE STATE. “When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” This brief, plain, simple, beautiful, allusion in one sentence to their future bliss implies, First : That “He shall appear.” He will come, according to His purpose, and promise, and arrangement, to destroy the powers and works of death and hell ; to deliver a groaning creation from its bondage of corruption ; to arrange and to adorn the new heaven and the new earth ; to perfect the salvation of His followers, and to deliver up the kingdom to His Father. The very *last* promise He gave was, “Surely I come quickly.” He will effect the work of the last day, not by commission ;—but will come Himself. He will “surely” come, and “quickly” come. Though eighteen hundred years have passed since He gave that promise, and though thousands of ages may elapse before He come, those ages will pass

"quickly," and His people, as they joyfully awake that morning, will say, Behold, He comes ! and, indeed, He has come "quickly." Secondly : When He shall appear, they shall be present to "see Him." The brilliance of many a court-day in England passes without being seen by millions of the most loyal subjects. After reading the announcement of a coming royal day, they who care for such pageantry have to sigh and say, We cannot be there. The celebration will be one of great splendour, but we shall not be present to see it. But every disciple of Christ shall be present at the last day. Every one of His followers shall be there to "see Him." And, Thirdly : They shall see and hear *all*, from first to last ;—shall awake in time ;—shall be taken to the best position to see Him, His crown, and throne, and court, and face. It will be not a dim distant sight of Him, but a full clear, near, satisfying view :—"They shall see Him *as He is*." And, Fourthly : "Shall be like Him." Shall be in His nature, in His righteousness, in His love ; and so "like Him" in body, and spirit, and state, as to be meet to be for ever with Him.

IV. THAT THOSE PRIVILEGES OF THEIR FUTURE STATE CAN NOT BE FULLY REVEALED TO GOD'S PEOPLE ON EARTH. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." First : There are here no *mediums* adapted to make fully known to them the glories of heaven. No earthly language can describe the glory of heaven. The copious language of England cannot. The strong old words of Wales cannot. The wonderful symbols of China cannot. The inspiration of the bard cannot put it in his verse. The painter has no colours of the right tint to put it on his canvass. The harps and organs of this world can give no specimen of the music of heaven. The imagination of the strongest faith on earth cannot have a full vision of the place. We may speak of mansions, and temples, and pearly gates, and flowery mounds, and white robes, and living fountains ; but we can have no full idea of heaven. We have no language, no symbols, no figures, equal to a full description. "It doth not yet appear what

we shall be." And, Secondly : If there had been *mediums* for a full revelation, there is not a *heart* on earth sufficiently strong and spiritual to bear the weight of that glory. A full view of heaven would unfit the merchantman to spread his sails before the winds of heaven ; would unfit the harvest-man to reap his corn field ; would unfit the shopman to stand behind his counter ; would unfit the Christian for even the highest places of earth's holiest sanctuaries. A full vision of an unveiled heaven would be too much for the best believer in his present state of probation.

V. THAT ALL THESE PRIVILEGES, PRESENT AND TO COME, FLOW FROM THE "LOVE" OF THE FATHER. "Behold, what manner of love!" Behold how low, and vile, and worthless, the *object* on which it fixed its regard and compassion! Behold, how *rich* the salvation it provided ;—life, and more than life! Behold, how great the *sacrifice* it made to obtain for sinful man that grace and glory !

VI. THAT EVERY MAN, THAT HATH THIS HOPE OF HEAVEN THROUGH THE LOVE OF THE FATHER, "PURIFIETH HIMSELF." He knows that God is pure ; and pants after purity that he may enjoy communion with God. He knows that Jesus is pure ; and he "purifieth himself," that he may be a disciple of Jesus. He knows that the Spirit is holy ; and he "purifieth himself" that he may realize the consolations of his fellowship. He understands that the truths and ordinances of the Gospel are pure ; and he purifieth himself in order to experience their power. He knows that angels are pure ; and he "purifieth himself" in order to share in their company and their ministry. He knows that the spirits of the "just made perfect" are pure, and that all the services and enjoyments of heaven are pure ; and he "purifieth himself," that he may be made meet for heaven.

SAMUEL ROBERTS, M. A.

Llanbrynmair.

SUBJECT:—*The Supreme Importance of Moral Purity.*

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie," &c.—1 John, i. 5-7.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-third.

The context suggests:—

First: *That Christianity is based upon the palpable facts in the history of an extraordinary person.* The person is here said to be "from the beginning,"—"which was with the Father;" is called "the Word of life," "Eternal life." And these facts, connected with this personage, John says, "We have seen with our eyes," &c.

Secondly: *That these palpable facts were observed by competent witnesses, who have transmitted them to us for moral ends.* The apostles were intellectually and morally competent. The facts were to promote "fellowship" with God, "joy," moral purity. This last comprehends all, and this is the subject before us:—the supreme importance of moral purity.

I. MORAL PURITY IS THE ESSENCE OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER. "God is light." Light is mysterious in its essence; science has speculated whether it belongs to matter or mind. "Who, by searching, can find out God?" Light is revealing in its power; through it we see all things. The universe can only be rightly seen through God. Light is felicitating; the animal creation feels it. He is the one "blessed" God. Light is pure, and in this sense God is called light.

There are three things which distinguish God's holiness from that of any creature:—

First: *It is absolutely perfect.* Not only has He never thought an erroneous thought, felt a wrong emotion, performed a wrong act, but He never *can*. He is infinitely above it. There is no power in the universe that can tempt

Him. In Him there is no darkness at all. His holiness is the glory of His being, the splendour of His perfections, the stability and majesty of His throne. He charges the angels with folly, &c. "He is glorious in holiness."

Secondly: *It is eternally independent.* The holiness of all creatures is derived from without, and depends greatly upon the influences and aids of other beings. But God's holiness is uncreated. He was as holy when He dwelt in the solitude of eternity—when there was no being in immensity but Himself, as He is now. He dwells "in the high and holy place." The holiness of creatures is susceptible of change.

Thirdly: *It is universally felt.* Where is it not felt? It is felt in heaven. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," is one of the anthems that resound through the upper world. It is felt in hell. All guilty consciences feel its burning flash. It is the consuming fire. It is felt on earth. The compunctions of conscience, the impressions of Calvary, the strivings of the Spirit, the judgments of providence, make us sensible of it.

Another argument suggested for the importance of moral purity is —

II. THAT MORAL PURITY IS THE CONDITION OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. "If we say that we have fellowship with him," &c. Three things are implied here:—

First: *That fellowship with God is a possible thing.* John assumes this as something that need scarcely be argued. Fellowship with man is intercourse; and fellowship with God is the same. It is the intercourse of mind—a reciprocal giving and receiving. God giving benevolently, and man receiving gratefully and reverently. Two thoughts show its possibility. First: That the fellowship of a moral being with its Creator is antecedently probable. God is the Father of all intelligent spirits; and is it not probable that the father and the child should have intercourse with each other? Secondly: Man is in possession of means suited to this end. If it be said that, God is invisible—that we cannot commune with

Him; we may reply by saying, that man is invisible, and we do commune with *Him*. The spirit with which we commune in man we see not. How do we commune with man? *Through his works*. A machine will put us into a kind of fellowship with the machinist, a picture with the painter, a building with the architect. *Through his words*. Words are channels through which the thoughts and feelings of men are interchanged, and souls flow and reflow into each other. *Through memorials*. We have something in our possession which belonged to another; given, perhaps, to us as a keepsake. That thing, however trifling, will bring our spirits into fellowship with the giver. We have all these things to aid us in communion with God. *We have His Works*. Nature is a building—a machine, a painting; and how suited is it to bring us into communion with the architect, machinist, and artist! *We have His word*. It is of course written, not oral;—but not the less helpful to communion on this account. Do we not commune with friends through letters? God's letter has the advantage of every other in this respect, inasmuch as it is the expression of an unchangeable mind. A letter written by a friend twelve months ago may not be the expression of his mind to day:—man changes. But the Bible is the same. *We have His memorials*. The Lord's Supper. And in connexion with all these, we have His Spirit. There is no reason to believe that minds can act directly on each other; but there is reason to believe from philosophy, consciousness, and the Bible, that the divine mind does act directly on the human. It is implied:—

Secondly: *That fellowship with God is a desirable thing*. John assumes this. Nothing is more desirable for man than this. It is the necessary condition of all true growth, dignity, and blessedness. It is implied:—

Thirdly: *That this fellowship will ever be characterized by a holy life*. "If we say that we have fellowship," &c. Purity is the condition of fellowship. Before a man can commune with God he must realize His presence, have confidence in

Him, and be in thorough sympathy with Him :—a sympathy of disposition, view, and aim. Let no man, then, say, that he has fellowship with God, whilst he lives in sin. The Poetic Deist may say he has fellowship with God through the grand in nature : but if he walk in darkness—if he sin, *he lies*.

III. THAT MORAL PURITY IS THE END OF CHRIST'S MEDIATION. "The blood of Jesus Christ," &c. By "blood," is not meant literal blood. Sometimes it is spoken of as if the word really meant this. It means *sacrificed* life. Blood was regarded as the principle of life : and Christ gave His life for sinners. So that we are said to be redeemed by His blood, saved by His blood, cleansed by His blood. The doctrine is, *that Christ sacrificed His life to make us pure*.

His sacrificed life presented an all-sufficient atonement for sin ; the most abhorrent views of evil and attractive views of holiness ; and the most potent motives to avoid the one and to pursue the other. Thus it cleanses from ALL sin. The law of Moses provided no atonement for certain sins, such as adultery, idolatry, murder, &c. But the work of Christ *cleanseth from ALL SIN*.

Behold, then, the supreme importance of moral purity. It is the essence of the divine character ; it is the condition of divine fellowship ; it is the end of mediation.

SUBJECT : *The Fifth Scene in the History of Redeemed Humanity : or, the Unending Age of Blessedness.**

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city," &c.—Rev. xxi. 1-4.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-fourth.

The retributive process is over ; the characters of all have been tried ; and the doom of all pronounced. The wicked

* Continued from p. 257.

are driven away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous have entered into life eternal. These words suggest two thoughts in relation to this final state:—

I. THAT IT WILL BE SO DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE PRECEDING STATES THROUGH WHICH REDEEMED HUMANITY HAS PASSED, AS TO BE REGARDED AS “NEW.” “A new heaven and a new earth,” and a “new Jerusalem.” In what sense will it be “new”? We can conceive of three senses in which it will be new.

First: *It may be physically new.* There is reason to believe that a great change will take place in the material creation. Indeed there are forces which are constantly changing the earth, and the heavens, or atmosphere, in which our clouds swim and stars shine. The inorganic, the vegetable, and the animal, worlds are constantly changing. The belief of the ancients, the doctrine of geology, and the scriptures, favour the opinion that that the fires which burn in the centre of the globe will one day burst into a universal volcano, mantle the earth in flames, and reduce its fairest forms to ashes. Out of this ruin may rise “a new heaven and a new earth.”

Secondly: *It may be dispensationally new.* Heaven and earth are sometimes used in scripture, to designate the dispensations under which men have lived. “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth.” The reference is, undoubtedly, to the Jewish economy. The Patriarchal gave way to the Mosaic, the Mosaic to the Christian, and now the Christian will give way to something else. Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father.

Thirdly: *It may be relatively new.* New in the estimation and feeling of the occupants. No truth is more clear than this, that the world is to a man according to the state of his mind. To the voluptuary, it is a scene of animal gratification; to the worldling, it is a scene for barter; to the poet, it is beauty; to the philosopher, it is

science ; to the saint, it is a temple. Change a sinner's mind and you change the world to him. He feels, and sometimes says, the world is a new thing to me—a new heaven and a new earth.

Let the men who now people this world, come back to it in a perfect state, possessing a thorough sympathy with each other, the universe, and God. Will not the heavens and earth be NEW to them? Will not all nature appear entirely different to what it was when they lived here the creatures of imperfection and sin? Give the soul new moral senses and you will give the material universe new attributes.

Another fact which we infer from the text in relation to this state is :—

II. THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS FINAL STATE AND ALL PRECEDING ONES, WILL ARISE PARTLY FROM THE ABSENCE OF THINGS WHICH WERE IDENTIFIED WITH ALL PRECEDING ONES, AND PARTLY FROM THE PRESENCE OF THINGS NOT FOUND IN CONNEXION WITH THE PRECEDING ONES.

First : *The difference will arise from the absence of some-things which were identified with all the preceding states.* There are three things mentioned here as being absent from this state. (1.) *Agitation.* “No more sea.” The sea is here, undoubtedly, used as the emblem of commotion and distress. It is never at rest. The atmosphere may sink into passivity ; no breeze may stir its heart ; the clouds may rest on its quiet bosom, and the trees may sleep in its calm embrace. Night outspreads her sable mantle over the world, and all the busy tribes of earth and air sink to repose. But for the sea there is no rest ; wave succeeds wave ; a restless pulse throbs through all its particles. This is a true emblem of what the human world has been ever since the introduction of sin. Billow after billow of painful thought and feeling has been surging in rapid succession over the spirits of men through all preceding times. But now there is no “SEA.” The church, agitated by the storms of ages, is at rest. All the elements of mental agitation will be ex-

cluded from heaven. What are they? *Pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, doubt, fear, envy, guilt.* These lash the soul into stormy billows now. But in the final state these will not be;—there will be “no more sea.” (2.) *Death will be absent.* “*And there shall be no more death.*” Death has been the terror of all preceding periods—it has reigned through all. But no death in this final state. Death-beds, funeral processions, cemeteries, are not known there. (3.) *Suffering.* “Neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain.” All these are excluded for ever from this final state.

Secondly: *This difference will arise from the presence of some things which have not been in connexion with any preceding states.* What are they? (1.) *A full manifestation of God.* “And I John saw the holy city,” &c. Jerusalem was the special residence of God, and the scene where His Glory was displayed. The language, therefore, implies a *full* manifestation of God. (2.) *A perfect fellowship with God.* The fellowship will be—*Direct*—God *Himself* with them. Not through mediums. *Permanent.* He will “dwell with them.”

We have, with great brevity, endeavoured to portray the epochs which are disclosed in the preceding chapter and verses before us; the epochs through which redeemed humanity has to pass. We believe that this is a correct interpretation of this passage. But were it not so, our sketch is still true. The ages we have mentioned, are ages that belong to redeemed humanity. The first we are passing through now; and the others, though the nearest be immeasurably distant, are approaching with the march of time.

Indeed, these epochs dawn in every redeemed soul. Our first stage in the divine life is conflict; then a partial triumph; then, perhaps, a reaction; then the retribution; and then the unending blessedness. May this unending blessedness be thine, my friend!

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

AUGUSTIN.

(Continued from p. 285.)

EARLY in 387, Augustin was, with his son, Adeodatus and his friend Alypius, baptized by Ambrose. He now resigned all worldly ambition. He set off for Tagasta with his mother, who had followed him to Milan. On their way they stopped at Ostia. Here, while they were waiting to embark, Monica and her son were one day earnestly talking of things high and eternal. She said, "My son, for myself, I have nothing more to desire in this life. I know neither what I am doing here, nor why I am here; earthly hope being dead in my breast. The only thing that made me desire to remain was the wish to see you a Catholic Christian before my death. God has given me more; I see you consecrated to His service and despising earthly happiness."* She died a few days after, and Augustin "offered for" the departed "the sacrifice of our redemption."† This was about the beginning of November, 387. Augustin was then in the thirty-third year of his age.

Instead of embarking, Augustin now went back to Rome, where he remained nearly a year, writing various works. He then visited Carthage, and afterwards returned to Tagasta. Here he sold his patrimony, and gave the proceeds to the poor.

In 391, Augustin was ordained priest by Valerius, bishop of Hippo. His preaching was powerful and successful; and his diligence in study was not only uninterrupted but newly stimulated. One of his most important acts was a public disputation with Fortunatus, a Manichean presbyter. In 395, the bishop Valerius, laden with the infirmities of age, desired Augustin as his colleague in the bishopric. He was

* Confess. IX. x.

† ib. xii.

accordingly ordained bishop by Aurelius of Carthage and others, and was soon afterwards left alone in the office.

Augustin rendered, during his episcopate, great service to the Catholic party by acting as their champion, both in person and by writing, against the Donatist schismatics. It is impossible to enter here into the details of this subject. Suffice it to say, that the Donatists, whose schism arose from a dispute touching the election of Caecilianus to the see of Carthage, in 311, regarded themselves as alone constituting the true church, and salvation as restricted to their communion. They were defeated by Augustin in a conference at Carthage, in 411. The reader who may wish further information is referred to Neander's *General Church History*, in Clark's *Foreign Theological Library*, vol. III. p. 204—291.

It was during Augustin's episcopate that the heretic Pelagius also began to promulgate his doctrines. His radical principle he thus expresses:—"We owe it to God that we are men, but to ourselves that we are righteous." He denied original sin, predestination and grace, and held on the atonement and on justification notions inadequate to Scripture and human experience. These doctrines Augustin roused himself to resist, which he did both orally and by writing. He had previously written "*On Free Will*," and he now wrote "*On the Grace of Christ*," and "*On Original Sin*." Such questions as these succeeded those on the Trinity as the occupation of the more subtile intellects of the Church, and amongst them Augustin was a great chief. The orthodox doctrines on grace, election and predestination are called by his name, Augustinian.

The life of Augustin, distracted hitherto by mental conflict and theological polemics, was to end in view of carnal weapons and perturbed by material warfare. The Vandals were overrunning and devastating the Province of Africa. They laid siege to Hippo about the beginning of June, 430. The bishop would not save himself by flight, but chose to remain faithfully with his flock. He prayed that God would deliver Hippo from the besiegers, or enable His servants to bear the threatened calamities, and that he himself, if the city must be taken, might previously be called from the world. He fell ill of a fever in the third month of the siege, spent his last days in reading the penitential Psalms and in

prayer, and slept in peace on the 28th of August, 430, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, after having served the church, as priest or bishop, for nearly forty years.

Augustin possessed distinguished powers of subtile speculation and argument. One of his maxims was, that what we hold with a firm faith we should aim also at viewing in the light of reason. He was also endued with warm and tender feeling and a vigorous imagination. But he failed in solidity of judgment, and was not remarkable for what is termed common sense. We cannot avoid feeling as we read his intensely "subjective" writing, that, with much that is healthy and admirable, there is a mixture of the sickly and the weak. In his religious history he affords, notwithstanding, a splendid example of the power of Christian truth and of God's grace.*

As to scholarship, he was well read in Latin literature,—not so well in Greek; for with the Greek tongue he was not over familiar. Of Hebrew he knew nothing. This last circumstance occasioned him disadvantage as an interpreter. He suffered himself to be seduced by the temptation to allegorize. As a theologian he prepared the way for Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, &c.

It may be questioned whether as a Christian, priest, or bishop, Augustin ever paid much attention to preaching as an art. His eloquence seems not so much formed on the classical models—though there is an evident classical substratum—as peculiar to himself, and spontaneously bursting forth in obedience to powerful Christian conception and emotion. His style and manner would probably at first appear strange to a cultivated heathen, but the attentive listener would soon be profoundly interested. Nor was the best kind of effect wanting, for his preaching was greatly successful in reaching the understanding, the heart, the conscience, in changing the character and in furthering the growth of good.

In our next number we may give some further account of Augustin's theology and works, paying especial attention to his "City of God," his "Confessions," and his Sermons.

* See Dr. Owen on the Holy Spirit, III. vi.; especially pp. 357 and 8, of Vol. III of Goold's edition of his works.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

A THIRD GALLERY OF PORTRAITS. BY REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.
Edinburgh: James Hogg; London: R. Groombridge and Sons.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL. BY PETER BAYNE,
M. A. Edinburgh: James Hogg; London: R. Groombridge and
Sons.

THE GALLERY OF PORTRAITS starts two questions; one to be determined by the philosophical ethologist, and the other by the literary artist. The first is, Is it morally proper to draw portraits of living men without their consent, and oftentimes to their disadvantage? It is certainly brave, but is it right? The picture may please our gossiping instincts and impart to us no little information, and that in a very interesting way; but does the drawing square with those principles of rectitude which should sway us in our relations to each other? Without entering on any casuistic line of argument, we may state that several considerations incline us to the belief that there is nothing wrong in the work itself;—that is, wrong, supposing the motive of the artist to be pure. For example, each man's character concerns his contemporaries. "No man liveth unto himself." If a man were disrelated from all others,—if all his movements terminated on himself, and had no bearing on any one else, it would seem improper that he should, contrary to his wish, be brought forth from the solitude of his isolation and held up to the public eye. Were his character of no consequence to any one, it would be little less than an unjustifiable curiosity, and a wicked impertinence, for others, in any way, to concern themselves about it. But the history of every man, necessarily, concerns others; each is a link in the great chain of society, and cannot move without propagating an influence, from link to link, no one knows how far. This is, of course, more strikingly the case with public men. Again, the study of character is the most important study of man. It could, we think, be shown that he who analyzes and honestly describes the character of a man, does a far

greater service to his race than the botanist who describes plants, the anatomist who expounds the animal organization, or the astronomer who discourses on the stars. And then, moreover, we think that if it be right to portray the character of the dead, which right seems universally conceded, it certainly cannot be wrong to sketch the characters of the living. The latter is certainly a far more courageous work, and likely to be far more faithfully performed. The subject too, in the one case, has an opportunity of benefiting by the strictures, and defending himself from any supposed injustice ;—in the other case he has not. On the whole, then, we have but little doubt of the rectitude of portraying living men. The other question which this volume starts is, Are the portraits faithful? Are they fair likenesses? This, of course, can only be determined by those who are well acquainted with the original. Our own impression is, that whilst some are a little too much flattered, and others, in beauty, are scarcely up to the original, on the whole, there is a remarkable likeness ;—and some are photographically true. It is true, that our painter is fond of colors, and that his genius is marvellously inventive ; so that the canvass of each portrait has striking strokes and shades, and strange and luxuriant scenery ;—but all this adds wondrously to the interest and fascination of the picture. We recommend this work as one of those expressions of superior genius which always, at once, interest, stimulate, and inform, the reader.

“THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, Social and Individual ” This is a work intended to remove a confessedly general impression, that evangelical religion is scarcely compatible with strength and grasp of intellect. The author exposes the falseness of this idea, by a philosophic and forceful exposition of the principles of the Christian character, and a biographic sketch of certain men who, in our age, practically embodied the Christian religion, and who are universally recognized as the highest types of intellectual and moral greatness. In working out his theme, the author has occasion to deal with some of the profoundest and most vital questions in the science of mind, social statistics, theology, and ecclesiastical politics ; and it is but just to say, that he moves in those abstruse departments of thought, not with the mincing of a sciolist, but with the mien of a sage. We are not able to endorse all the book contains. We cannot, for example, see that Foster indicated a want of “clear conception” in his denunciations of war. We think, that the more deeply and bravely philosophical a man is in ethical enquiries, the more terrible will be his fulminations against war. The “whining sentimentalists” we have generally found amongst the advocates of a popular war. It requires the bravery of individual thinking and conviction to stand against the tide of popular sentiment. Nor can we see much of the true hero in

Budgett. Disinterestedness is the soul of genuine greatness. The men who drive hard bargains, amass a fortune, give their thousands per annum to religious institutions, are not, necessarily, true types of superior worth. The history of fortune-making is too often a history of falsehood and crime. But whilst we cannot adopt all the views of this book, we have no hesitation in saying, that it is a work of transcendent worth. In its noble purpose, literary features, vigorous thinking, and moral inspiration, it belongs to the first class. We earnestly recommend it to young men; thank the author for the good he has done us; and hope to meet him soon again in our literary walk.

CREATION'S TESTIMONY TO ITS GOD; or the accordance of Science, Philosophy, and Revelation. A Manual of the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, with Especial Reference to the Progress of Science, and Advantage of Knowledge. BY THOMAS RAGG. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman.

Never, perhaps, did the *a posteriori* argument for the being of a God speak with such charming variations of voice and convincing energy, as in this comparatively small book. Its vast capabilities are here brought into play and plied with poetic grace and philosophic skill. Witnesses from every part of the creation,—the vast and the minute, the remote and the proximate, the animate and inorganic, are brought into court; questioned and cross-questioned: and the unequivocal and concurrent testimony of all is, that there is ONE GOD, THE FATHER OF ALL, OF WHOM AND TO WHOM ARE ALL THINGS. We do not aver, that in a strictly logical sense, the *a posteriori* argument can prove the existence of an Infinite Creator;—for it cannot by any induction get the premises which can involve such a conclusion. But we do say, that we have never seen its power more effectively worked for this purpose than in the volume before us. We have not yet seen the successful Essay of the Burnet trust, but if it equal the work before us, it is beyond all price.

REFORMERS BEFORE THE REFORMATION: PRINCIPALLY IN GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS. Depicted by Dr. C. ULLMAN: the Translation by the Rev. ROBERT MENZIES. Vol. I. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS. By RUDOLPH STIER, Doctor of Theology, Chief Pastor and Superintendent of Schkenditz. 1 Vol. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

EZEKIEL AND THE BOOK OF HIS PROPHECY: An Exposition, by PATRICK FAIRBAIN, D. D., Professor of Theology in the Free Church College, Aberdeen. Second Edition Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

"THE REFORMERS BEFORE THE REFORMATION" is a valuable contribution to the cause of ecclesiastical history. It presents a lucid and powerful exposition of what the Reformation really was; and then proceeds to give a biographic sketch of some of those great men, hitherto generally unknown—who paved the way for it, and were its honoured pioneers—who bore the torch into the dark and hitherto untrodden path of free thought. In this volume John of Goch, and John of Wesel, are depicted along with the men of their circle. It is a deeply interesting work, fraught with immense information concerning the men, institutions, and customs, that existed when the first grey beams of the reformation dimly flickered upon the political and ecclesiastical hills of Europe.

"THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS" is a work which essays to expound the meaning and develop the harmony of all the spoken words of Him who is the WORD OF GOD. There is a thoroughness about this book not common to annotatory works;—a thoroughness of scholarly criticism, philosophical analysis, and consecration to the discovery of truth. The author does not engross your attention with the externals and accidents of his theme. He does not waste your time in describing the shell; he pierces it and unfolds the kernel. To use his own figure, he is not so much concerned about the manger and the swaddling clothes, as about the HOLY CHILD.

"EZEKIEL AND THE BOOK OF HIS PROPHECY" has won "golden opinions" from competent critics and obtained the seal of public approbation. This second edition, the author informs us, has several advantages over the first; the translation extends through the whole book instead of over parts; a few passages have received a new interpretation, and the introduction is more amplified. The work, which shows its author to possess the attributes of a true scriptural exegete in a very high degree, is a valuable boon to the Biblical student. We have found it to bring something like intellectual sunlight to some passages of this obscure book, over which there hung before the misty cloud of strange symbols, unknown customs, and obsolete modes of expression. We heartily thank the author for it.

We also heartily thank the enterprising publishers for introducing such invaluable works as these to our notice.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN DRYDEN ; with Life and Critical Dissertation, and Explanatory Notes. By the REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN. 2 Vols. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES ; with Memoir, Critical Dissertation, and Explanatory Notes. By the REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN. 2 Vols. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

“THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN DRYDEN” are well known, and will be hailed by many. For the character of Dryden, the “Poet Squab,” we have the utmost contempt ; it is moral putrescence itself: and the only reason for perpetuating his memory is, that he wrote some verses of poetry of admirable sentiment and style. For our own part, we would sooner tie the choicest productions of his versatile genius to lead and fling them into the abysses of ocean than have his character transmitted to posterity, unless it be transmitted in the way in which the editor of this edition of his poetry has done—as a monster to loathe, as a beacon to warn. Since literature is not opulent enough to afford the sacrifice of Dryden’s Poetry, we are thankful that in the present issue of his works he has an editor who, whilst he is fully equal to a just appreciation of the loftiest productions of his genius, has an eye to see, a heart to loath, and a pen to depict in hideous colours, the abominations of his life.

“THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES” are not so popular as those of Dryden, but in our judgment far more valuable. “The leading element of Bowles’ Poetry,” says the editor, “is sentiment—warm, mellow, tender, and often melancholy, sentiment.” He has no profound thought, no powerful pictures of passion, no creative imagination ; but over all his poetry has a sweet autumnal moonlight of pensive and gentle feeling.” It is quite sufficient recommendation of his poetry to say, that it inspired the genius of Samuel Taylor Coleridge :—who sings—

“My heart has thanked thee, Bowles ! for those soft strains.”

We do trust that the publisher of this magnificent and amazingly cheap edition of the British Poets, meets with that liberal measure of public patronage, to which his generous and noble enterprize justly entitles him.

SERMONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS; Preached in the College Chapel, Bradford. By WALTER SCOTT, Theological Tutor of Airdale College. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.

These are Ten Discourses by an able man, a venerable minister, and highly respected Theological professor. Though from the pen of

an aged minister, they are free from dogmatism; and though the product of a theological tutor, they have none of the technicalities of the school, or the pedantry of the chair. Whilst in thought they have the depth and mellowness of age, in spirit and style they have the freshness and elasticity of youth. There is no wordiness here: each discourse is literally surcharged with striking and suggestive thoughts.

EVANGELICAL MISSIONS. A Discourse. By J. P. MURSELL, of Leicester. London: Benjamin Green.

This is one of those great sermons which only a great man could produce, and which are only suitable to great occasions. It is, therefore no model. It is not a shower, nor a streamlet of thought, but a river, deep and clear, and in rapid flow; with its banks overhung with every variety of luxuriant plants, beautiful flowers and majestic trees; and its sunny wavelets mirroring a thousand foreign objects from the surrounding hills and over-arching sky. We greatly admire it.

THE FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT. A Sermon, Preached in Dartmouth Place Chapel, Lewisham, on occasion of the Death of the Rev. John Sheppard, M. A. By the Rev. JOSEPH FENN, Minister of Blackheath Park Chapel.

This discourse is Evangelical in its strain and structure.

THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. A Discourse delivered in Eldon Street Chapel, on the Death of the Rev. William Innes, D. D. By JONATHAN WATSON, Edinburgh.

Thoughtful, eloquent, and solemn.

DR. INNES AND HIS TIMES. By ALFRED G. THOMAS. Edinburgh: Wm. Innes.

This is a discourse preached on the same occasion as the preceding one. We are greatly pleased with the plan of the sermon,—the philosophic method with which the preacher treats his text. It is short, but superior and suggestive.

WAY-SIDE GATHERINGS. By Rowland Elliott. London: Benjamin Green.

This is a small volume of tracts on a variety of subjects, pithy, pointed, and practical, suited to awaken and strengthen the serious in man.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW. No. 1, July 1855. We intended expressing our opinion of this New Quarterly at some length, but find our space is filled. We have only room to say, that as a whole, in high philosophic thinking, range of information, literary taste, variety of theme, independency of conviction, honesty of tone, fair-play, and general competency, it is equalled only by few, and excelled by none.

A HOMILY

ON

The Spiritual Universe:—

MAN'S SPIRITUAL RELATION TO IT MADE RIGHT
BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee,” &c.—John iii. 5-8.

THUS far we have been occupied, in the present series of homilies, in endeavouring to illustrate Spirit, and demonstrate the existence of a Spiritual Universe ; in sketching, by the light of Scripture, the grades of superhuman spirits, fallen and unfallen ; and in representing the Biblical idea of the “spirits of just men made perfect.” The state of the spirits of the wicked who have departed this life was dealt with, in a tolerably lengthened “germ,” some months ago.* We have now to finish this series by a practical view of a practical part of the subject: *the making man right in relation to the Spiritual Universe*. He is as we have seen SPIRIT:—as truly in the Spiritual Universe now, a member and tenant of it, as he will ever be. But he has lost his normal position. His original relations in it are not only disturbed but dissolved. Like a star that has broken off from its centre, the centripetal force of divine love has lost its hold on him ; he is rushing through darkness, in a career of ruin. How to bring him back, and link him to

* See Homilist, vol. I. p. 216.

the great primordial centre of "light and life" in the Spiritual Universe, is the greatest problem that has ever arisen in the history of human enquiry.—A problem, whose solution is not in the researches of science, nor in the philosophies of the world's great thinkers, but in the history and doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth.

The text gives us four facts in relation to this problem:—

I. THAT MAN'S WELL-BEING IN THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE DEPENDS UPON HIS NOW ENTERING INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Jesus speaks of entering "into the kingdom of God," as that which He supposed Nicodemus would regard as the chief Good; and of that which He himself evidently regarded as such. He represented, in His teaching, introduction to the kingdom of God as that which men should supremely strive after, and for which they should be prepared to make any sacrifice. The hand, the foot, the eye;—better even to sacrifice these, than not to "enter into the kingdom of God." (Mark ix. 43-47.)

The question arises, what is meant by entering into the kingdom of God? It does not mean, (1.) *being under the absolute government of God*. In this sense we are in His kingdom, and out of it we can never go. There is no wing to waft us beyond its boundaries. "His kingdom ruleth over all." The animate and inanimate, matter and mind, instinct and reason, physical movements and spiritual operations, agents and acts, intellect and its thoughts, heart and its emotions, will and its efforts, hell and heaven, are all under the dominion of God. Our connexion with His kingdom in this sense is independent alike of our choice or conduct. Whether we are freemen or serfs, loyal citizens or rebels, tread the fair fields of immensity with the joyous step of liberty, or sigh in dungeons with the "spirits in prison," we are in His kingdom, and bound indissolubly to His throne. Nor, (2.) *does it mean being under the gospel dispensation*. It is true, the expression, "kingdom of God," is sometimes used to designate the gospel economy. Thus

John the Baptist used it when he said, "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" thus Mark uses it, when he speaks of Joseph of Arimathea, as "waiting for the kingdom of God;" and thus Jesus uses it when at the commencement of His ministry He said, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also." But this cannot be the meaning here. For in this sense the kingdom of God comes to every man to whom the gospel is preached.

What then does it mean? The general meaning, I think, may be expressed thus:—*The reign of God over the individual soul with its hearty concurrence.* God's kingdom over souls may be divided into two provinces. The one He rules without the concurrence of the subject; and the other with its hearty wish and choice. Wicked men and fallen angels belong to the former; true Christians and celestial intelligences belong to the latter. The latter is the reign spoken of here; and in other places where the kingdom of God is represented as being "within;" as coming "not with observation;" as being not "in word but in power;" as consisting "not in meat and drink but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" as being that which Christ states to be the duty of every man to "seek first." It means having God as the chosen monarch of the soul; to marshal all its faculties, direct all its operations, and turn the whole current of its thoughts and sympathies into the channel of His own will.

Now that this entrance into the kingdom of God—this cordial spiritual obedience to the divine will is indispensable to man's well-being, will appear from the following considerations.

First: *Without it there is no true liberty of soul.* Liberty and slavery may be both expressed by one word—*subjection*. Subjection to the senses, the opinions, the passions, the caprice either of ourselves or others, is serfdom. Physical slavery is but a very faint image of spiritual; and civil despots are but the shadows of those enthroned on a corrupt soul. But, whilst *subjection* will represent slavery, it will also

represent liberty. Absolute submission to God, the adoption of His will as our law in everything, the surrendering of self, and all to Him, are the eternal condition of true liberty in a moral creature. His will alone affords scope for the full and everlasting play of all our powers ; and a supreme sympathy with that will, is the only inspiration that can set and keep the soul in the enchanting music of harmonious action. Philosophically, men may as well strive for physical vigour, without obedience to the laws of health, as strive for liberty without submission to the will of God. His will is the universal, inflexible, and absolute, law of the creation ; opposition to it is necessarily confusion and slavery ; a loving submission to it is harmony, freedom, and bliss.

Secondly ; *Without this, there is no true peace of conscience.* A *feeling* that the supreme will should be obeyed underlies all our consciousness, and baffles all the attempts of scepticism to obliterate it. Men, everywhere, whatever their theological views, or measure of intellectual culture and development, *feel* that the will of their Deity is the supreme law which they are *bound* to obey. Conscience will own allegiance to no sovereign but the ABSOLUTE. Other lords may usurp the throne, and obtain the mastery over it, but it will never peacefully submit to their rule. No time nor force can crush its instinct of rebellion against all authorities but the supreme. It will shake every fibre and faculty of the soul with the terrible roar of the artillery which it hurls against all potentates but God. Our moral constitution renders peace of soul impossible under any reign but God's. But where he reigns, all is blessed serenity. Like the noiseless stars, every faculty moves peacefully in a sphere made luminous by the rays it borrows from the central fires ; and like the channel of a majestic river, into which a thousand streams have flown, the underlying purposes of the soul bear on in calm and mighty flow all the complex tendencies and sympathies of the heart.

Thirdly : *Without this there is no growth of soul.* By the growth of soul, I mean not the growth of any particular

faculty, principle, or power ; but the growth of the whole—the growth of all its parts : as the tree grows simultaneously and in symetrical proportions ; as Bacon says, in relation to moral culture, “We must not proceed as a statuary proceeds in forming a statue, working now on one part and now on another ; but we must proceed, and it is in our power to proceed, as nature does, in forming a flower or any other of her productions ; *Rudimenta partium omnium simul parit et producit* : She throws out altogether, and at once, the whole system of every being, and the rudiments of all the parts.”—I mean growth in *holy, moral*, force. Force to subordinate the outward to its will, force to tread the path of duty with a firm and dauntless step ;—looking foes the most ruthless and terrible in the eye, and bidding them stand aside ; force to bear the spirit buoyant over the mountain billows, and under the midnight storm ; force to resist the evil and pursue the good ; subordinate the senses to intellect, the intellect to conscience, and the conscience to the majesty of right ; force to meet death with triumph, and, like Stephen, cleave the heavens in the mortal hour, and catch an uplifting glance of the glories of the spiritual world. This is the true force of soul. A force without which, what are we ? Machines ! yes, machines worked by external influences, reeds shaken by the wind, slaves under the iron yoke of circumstances,—feeling ever the lash of remorse for the past, and of terror for the future. But this force belongs to no soul where the moral monarch is not God. Under every other sovereignty the spirit, in a moral sense, becomes more and more feeble ; the victim, not only of outward, but of inward evils ; scared by the demon ghosts of its own morbid fancies. But under the genial and benign reign of the eternal Father, the soul strikes its roots deep beside the fountain of life ; and grows pure and beautiful as the lily, and strong and majestic as Lebanon.

Sufficient, we presume, has been stated to show the truth of this first proposition, which we deduce from the

passage under review, namely, that *man's well-being in the spiritual universe depends upon his now entering into the kingdom of God*. We must "seek" His kingdom, come at once under His rightful and gracious reign, have His will done *in us* as it is done in heaven, before we can, from the very necessity of our nature and relations, be happy. And to be thus in His kingdom is to be in heaven *now*, as truly, if not as perfectly, as patriarchs and apostles are there. To have this "kingdom of God within," is to have all the splendors and felicities of the apocalyptic heaven without.

We infer from the text:—

II. THAT INTRODUCTION TO THIS KINGDOM OF GOD INVOLVES A GREAT MORAL CHANGE. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus being a Jew, a Pharisee, and a member of the great council of the nation, ought to have known what the expression "born again" meant. It was a phrase applied to designate the change which took place in a Gentile proselyte, when he renounced his paganism and identified himself with the Jewish religion. So great was the importance which the Hebrew Rabbis attached to this change that they regarded the proselyte as no longer akin to his Gentile father or mother; and he might marry without committing incest, within the proscribed degrees of physical relationship.

But great as was the change, which the expression was used to designate in relation to the proselytes to Judaism, Jesus employed it to represent a far greater change. It is a *moral* change—moral in contradistinction to all physical, theoretical, or institutional changes. It is a change of heart. But *what is a change of heart?* IT IS A CHANGE IN THE SUPREME OBJECT OF LOVE.

Now that an introduction to this kingdom involves a great moral change, will appear evident from two considerations—

First : *That the object of supreme love is evermore the monarch of the soul,* The real sovereign is that which rules the soul. Monarchs, whose pageantry dazzles the eyes of the populace, whose name rings through obsequious courts and servile crowds, and whose authority is backed by mighty fleets and triumphant armies, are powerless, compared with those unseen potentates that sway the soul. And who are these ? The objects of your chief regard. For it is a law of your being, *that whatever you love most, rules you most absolutely.* There are, therefore, as many moral empires on earth as there are objects which men hold in supreme regard. PLEASURE is the sovereign of the sensual ; GAIN is the sovereign of the avaricious ; POWER is the sovereign of the ambitious ; DISPLAY is the sovereign of the vain ; and GOD is the sovereign of the good. What "principalities and powers" there are even in earth's department of the spiritual universe ! Into how many petty provinces is the empire of human souls divided !

Secondly : *That in the outset of man's history, God is never the object of his supreme love.* To offer illustrations, or evidences, of a fact so patent to all, would be unnecessary and tedious ; and to explain the various theories which have been set forth to account for it, is neither essential to our argument nor in keeping with our plan. We simply note the fact because, viewed in connexion with our first consideration under this head, it shows that to enter into the kingdom of God involves a great moral change. We are not born into this kingdom ;—"other lords at first have had dominion over us." As the monarch of the soul is the object of supreme love, and as the object of our chief affection, at first, is not God ; if we would come under His empire—if we would have Him enthroned within us, we must withdraw our hearts from other objects, and set them entirely upon Him. We "must be born again." If the old potentates of the soul are to be deposed, and God have the kingdom within us, the heart must change its chief object of love ; *and this is regeneration.* For a change in the object of

supreme love leads inevitably to a change in all our principles, purposes, and pursuits. It makes us new moral men.

Here hinges our fate ; this is *the* crisis. There are other great crises in the history of man. Birth is a great crisis. To be ushered, a helpless infant, into this wonderful creation, to breathe a breath of deathless inspiration, to receive impressions that the rolling current of ages cannot wear away, and to form a character out of which shall spring a Paradise, or flame a Gehenna, is a stupendous event. Death is a great crisis. To leave the world, to detach ourselves for ever from the scenes of our first impressions and activities, to surrender the body to the noisome worm and the gloomy grave, to leave for ever the stage of probation and the means of spiritual discipline, and to enter the ghastly scenes of retribution, and to go we know not where ; this, indeed, is a tremendous crisis. But great as is the crisis of birth and death, this crisis of regeneration is, for many reasons, more important than either. It gives our birth a value and our death a glory. It introduces us, *even now*, into the kingdom of God ;—a kingdom whose sphere is the holy universe, whose citizens are the great and the good of all worlds, whose law is love, and whose duration is eternity.

We infer from the text :—

III. THAT THE GREAT CHANGE, THUS INVOLVED IN AN INTRODUCTION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, IS EFFECTED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD. “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” The expression “water and the spirit” does not refer to two agents, but to one. It is a *Hebraism*, meaning spiritual water. John, the illustrious herald of Jesus, had already spoken of *fire* in connexion with the Spirit’s renovating operations. “I indeed,” says he, “baptise you with water unto repentance ; but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” As John did not mean material fire there, neither does Christ mean material water here. Jesus

may have spoken of the spirit in connexion with water for one or two, or both, of the following reasons:— (1.) *To represent the renovating effects of the divine agent.* His great aim in all His benign operations upon the human soul is to cleanse it thoroughly from all the filthiness of erroneous thoughts, corrupt feelings, and perverse volitions, and give it a new and ever-growing life. His action on the human spirit is like that of “fire” and “water,”—it renovates and purifies. Fire and water, the mightiest forces in the material world, whose incessant action gives every moment new forms to nature, are assuredly the most striking emblems of the operations of the divine Spirit upon the human soul. Moreover, Jesus may have spoken of the Spirit in connexion with water, (2.) *To represent the insufficiency of water itself to effect this regeneration.* Jesus was speaking to one who knew, or ought to have known what a *new birth* among the Jews meant. He knew washing or ablution was the necessary process through which this change was effected; that no Gentile came over to the Jewish religion, who was not washed with material water. Jesus, therefore, might have used the expression to intimate to Nicodemus, that the new birth which He required, was not like “the new birth” of his, the Jewish religion, which required material water; but it was that which required the spiritual water—a something that must act purifyingly, not on the body, but on the soul. In the light of this interpretation the passage, instead of affording the slightest support either to those who hold the absurd dogma of baptismal regeneration, or those who attach so much importance to baptism, as to make it a badge of denominational distinction or a condition of church membership, throws the ceremony into a very insignificant aspect. The baptism connected with the new birth, of which Christ speaks is a spiritual, not a material baptism—a baptism that cleanses the soul, and not the body. “Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”

The language of Jesus, here, suggests two thoughts in relation to the Spirit's agency in this work of regeneration.

First: *The indispensable necessity of the Spirit's agency to effect this change.* Jesus most clearly intimated this; and it is a doctrine so evident, both from scripture* and the difficulties of the work, that it is a settled article in the creed of all orthodox churches. Were it enquired, wherein does the *necessity* of divine agency in the effectuation of this work appear? We would answer, in the very *nature* of the work. What is the work? Recur to the definition already given. We have said that it is a CHANGE IN THE OBJECT OF SUPREME LOVE. Before the human mind *can* make God the object of supreme love, three things *must* take place. (1.) *A supremely attractive revelation of Him.* Who can love an unknown object? And God, to be known must be revealed. (2.) *Clearness of moral vision to see Him.* He may be revealed, but if our eyes are so dim and filmy, that we cannot see Him, His revelation will answer no practical purpose. What impression does the finest landscape, or the most glorious sky, make on the heart of the blind? (3.) *A practical determination to direct the eye fairly to Him.* He may be fully and gloriously unfolded to the vision, and the vision in itself may be good; but if we will not look, no impression can be produced. The Spirit is necessary for these three things. Who but the inspiring Spirit could have given us such a soul-attractive revelation of God as we have in the Scriptures? Who but He can so clear the spiritual vision—so scatter, by His refreshing breeze, those clouds and mists of impure feeling that darken the moral horizon of the soul, and enable it to see Infinite beauty distinctly as “the pure in heart” alone can see? Who but He can overcome that strange reluctance of the soul to approach its Maker, and fix its gaze on Him? Verily, the nature of the work indicates, that if we are born again, it must be by the

* Isaiah xliv. 3-4. Ezekiel xxxvi. 26-27; xxxvii. 13-14. John i. 12.13. Rom. v. 5; viii. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 11; xii. 3. 2 Thes. ii. 13. &c., &c.

water and the Spirit—the renovating energy of God. The necessity of the sun and shower to the production of vegetable life, is not more *reasonably* obvious and more generally recognized by true Christians, than are the operations of the Spirit to the generating of spiritual life in the souls of men. All good, moral as well as natural, is from God; all life, of every species, is from one primal source. The possessors of this new moral life, whatever their theological views may be, will evermore involuntarily and, by a necessary law of their religious nature, gratefully and adoringly refer it to the Father of Spirits.

Secondly: *That there is much in the manner of the Spirit's operation, in effecting this new birth, very mysterious.* "The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c. Several ideas have been attached by divines to these words; which, judging from the context, were evidently not intended to be expressed by Christ. For example, it has been supposed to teach the *sovereignty* of Divine influence. That God works upon men according to His own "good pleasure," is an undeniable doctrine; for it is absurd to suppose that if the Almighty acts at all, He acts from any force but the spontaneous impulse of His own nature. But the idea, however true, is not taught here. It has also been supposed to teach the *irresistibility* of Divine influence. It has been said that as the wind is beyond man's power, as he cannot arrest its course, or control its operation, neither *can* he effectually resist the spiritual influence of God. But this idea is *untrue* in itself; it is contradicted by the doctrine of human responsibility and the consciousness of every regenerated man. All that Jesus intended to teach was, evidently, that it could not be fully traced in all its modes of action. *How* does the wind act? You see the waters lashed into billows, forests bend, fleets tossed in confusion, and all nature struck with wildness, by an invisible agent. But how? How does that invisible agent produce these effects? Aye, how? This is the question. Perhaps, a gust of wind swept o'er the scene where Jesus and Nicodemus now stood; and the

divine teacher, as *was His wont*, seized the incident to illustrate His doctrine. We cannot explain all about the manner of divine influence, but though you cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whether it goeth, you hear the sound and you witness the effects.

IV. THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THUS INTRODUCED INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, BY THE TRANSFORMING AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT, ARE DISTINGUISHED, NOT AS THE SENSUOUS, BUT AS THE SPIRITUAL, IN THEIR LIVES. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." What is the great distinction here intended by Christ? It is not, of course, *physiological*. The man before regeneration has spirit, and the man after has flesh. The spiritual powers and the material organs remain intact. It is no sin in the good man to have "flesh;" it is no virtue in the bad man to have "spirit." Both flesh and spirit are the primary constituents of humanity and the precious gifts of God. The distinction is *moral*, and refers to a change in the relative influence which these two parts of the man exert over his life and conduct. It is a question of ascendancy. The unregenerated man, who Jesus says is "flesh," and whom the New Testament generally designates as carnal or fleshly, is the man who is *ruled* by the flesh—whose spiritual powers are in utter subjection to the body—"carnal, sold under sin." He is in all his experiences, purposes, and pursuits, "flesh." Matter is the centre of his being, the scene of his constant action, the fountain of his pleasures, the source of his motives. His impulses to action are "fleshly lusts," his mind is a "fleshly mind," his wisdom is "fleshly wisdom." He may possess mind of a high order, and educational attainments, and embellishments of the first class, and still, in the Saviour's sense, be only "flesh." He may be merchant, artist, author; but the inspiration of his business, the glow of his genius, the tinge and form of his thoughts, will be flesh rather than spirit. Nay, he may be a religionist, and that of the most orthodox stamp, but

his creed and devotions will "be after the law of a carnal commandment." More than half the religion of Christendom is the religion of *flesh*. Its inspiration is fleshly feeling ; its forms of thought are fleshly ; its rules of life are fleshly ; its Christ is "known only after the flesh." It judges after the flesh, walks after the flesh, wars after the flesh ;—it is altogether sensuous and gross. Wherever the *body reigns*, be it in the halls of science, the councils of cabinets, at the altars of devotion, or in the pulpits of Christianity, the man is "flesh," and not "spirit." He lives in the realm where nothing but forms are valued or seen ;—the sensuous realm bounded above, beneath, and around, by matter. His atmosphere is animal feeling—an atmosphere too hazy and thick to transmit the effulgent rays of the spiritual universe. HE IS FLESH.

But "that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." The spirit has regained its rightful sovereignty, and the man "minds spiritual things." Principles are dearer to him than property ; the claims of the souls are to him more imperative than those of the body ; the invisible is greater to him than the visible ; the "unseen" has a more potent influence over him than the seen. HE IS SPIRIT. Spirit, in the sense of *vivacity*. He is not sluggish and dull, but agile and blithe. All his faculties are instinct with a new life ; the life of conscience, the true life of man. The eye of intellect is brightened ; thought is active ; imagination is always on the wing. He "is spirit" in the sense of *social recognition*. He is not known as other men are known, as "men of the world," men who seek fleshly distinctions, fleshly wealth, and fleshly pleasure. But as a spiritual man he is known—as a man distinguished by spiritual convictions, sympathies, and aims. He "is spirit" in the sense of *divinity*. He is born of the divine Spirit, and has a kindredship with, and a resemblance to, his Eternal Father. He is a partaker of "the divine nature." His sympathies centre in the divine, and his life reflects it.

From this subject we learn—

First: *The infallible criterion by which to determine our true position in the spiritual universe.* Who are now right in the moral dominion of the Eternal?—In harmony of feeling with all holy created intelligences, and one with God? Not the men who are swayed by their senses, and whose chief study are their appetites;—whose chief question is, “What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?” Not the men who are more interested in the body than the soul—in matter than mind, in the visible forms of goodness than the hidden principles. No not these, however high their religious profession, punctual their attendance on religious services, zealous and self-sacrificing in their efforts to promote their religious views. They are without the pale of the spiritual kingdom. They are in the sensuous realm. They may denounce materialism as a system of thought, but in it, as a reality, “they live, and move, and have their being.” The men who are in the holy, moral, kingdom of God, and whose position in the spiritual universe is right *now*, are “spiritually-minded” men—men of spiritual insight, aspirations, and fellowship—men, who *practically* make matter, in all her combinations and forms, their absolute subject and efficient servant, the means of spiritual growth and the organ of divine communion. They are *now* in that transcendental world, of which philosophic Germany has some delightful dreams—a transcendentalism this, not of mere intellect, but of heart—not of mere thought, but of being: not transcendental idealists, but transcendental *men*. Their citizenship is *in* heaven. They are “in heavenly places” now.

Our subject shows:—

Secondly: *The great agent on whom we are dependent to make us right in the spiritual universe.* The celebrated FICHTE, speaking of his supersensuous philosophy, says, “I now first truly understand the first power that can enable the imprisoned Psyche to break from the chrysalis and unfold her wings: poised on which, she casts a glance on her abandoned cell, before springing upward to live and move

in a higher sphere." Great sage! We feel with thee the importance of enabling the "imprisoned Psyche" of humanity to "break from the chrysalis" of flesh, and "unfold her wings." But we are at issue with thee, mighty thinker! in supposing that thy philosophy profound, suggestive and spiritual though it is, is the "first power" to effect this glorious disimprisonment. No! the "first power" is the power of the ETERNAL SPIRIT. They only, that are "born of the Spirit, are spirit." It is the divine Spirit must call up the human from its sensual prison-house,—where it is "carnally sold under sin,"—unchain its limbs, lead it out into the open universe of spiritual thought and life, give it eyes to see the spiritual beauties, and wings to follow the flight of angels under the unclouded sky of intelligence and love. Blessed Spirit! help us ever to honour thy work, follow thy monitions, and adore thy love!

My Brother! Whilst I would have thee gratefully remember that it is the Spirit of God that must introduce thee to this gracious kingdom, if ever thou art introduced; I would have thee remember also, that that Spirit will do it, only in connexion with thine own efforts. He will help thee, as the teacher helps the pupils through the exercise of their faculties—as nature helps the agriculturist, by giving effectiveness to all the adapted processes of cultivation—as the winds help the mariner on his watery way, by filling the skilfully hoisted canvass with its breathing force. Wait not for miracles. The kingdom of heaven comes not "with observation." It comes not like the noisy cataract dashing from the hills, but like the silent dew, full of life; it comes not as ocean billows come to the shore under the furious blast of the storm; but like the deep river, it rolls, unheard, at your feet, and gives life to all who drink; it comes not as the lightning flash, but as the morning sun;—silently touching the fields into new life, and melting clouds into luminous ether. The Spirit speaks not in the roar of thunder, or the crash of earthquake, but in "the still small voice" of thought, conscience, and truth.

The Pulpit in the Family:

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON THE GREAT CONTRAST—THE CONDITION OF FALLEN MEN AND FALLEN ANGELS VIEWED IN THEIR RELATION TO THE MEDIA- TORIAL ECONOMY.

“And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God,” &c.—Mark i. 23-27

WHAT an extraordinary meeting! How surpassing strange are the events recorded in this narrative! Well, indeed, might all those present on the occasion, have been struck with amazement; for even we, at this great distance of time and place, cannot but feel a thrilling interest in perusing the account of this memorable meeting.

Let us, then, “turn aside and see this great sight.” In the first place, we behold a man in whom dwelt an unclean spirit, and the man in whom dwelleth “all the fulness of the godhead bodily,” meeting in close contact, face to face, under the same roof. In one, we see human nature sunk into the lowest depths of degradation, having become the shrine—the habitation of a devil. In the other, we behold the very same nature, raised and exalted into a state of infinitely higher dignity and glory than that of any created nature in the universe—being the consecrated temple and sanctuary of Jehovah.

It may appear somewhat singular, why the unclean spirit could not have detained the man from entering the synagogue on that occasion; he was undoubtedly aware that Jesus was in the neighbourhood, and that He would be present among the worshippers that morning: probably, he would have rather avoided His presence. The miserable man had hurried into many places he would have never

gone to, and committed many acts which he would never have committed, had he not been under the immediate control of his malignant tormentor: but to day, Lo! the man drags him along with him into the dread presence of one that is stronger than he! The man is influenced by the power of some mysterious impulse which the devil is unable either to understand or control. However, he is loth to quit his habitation—he is determined not to relinquish his present position, unless forced to do it. He might have flattered himself, that by remaining quiet during the service, not letting the man disturb the congregation, as he was wont to do, he might, peradventure, escape the notice of the great master of the assembly. Or he might have thought if he was detected and his case brought to an issue, he would have ascertained the worst, at all events. The man, however, entered the synagogue, and conducted himself decently and quietly for a time, As the great teacher proceeded with His discourse, attention was fully aroused, every eye was fixed upon Him. He, too, cast a glance round about upon His hearers. Bye-and-bye, the eye of Jesus caught the eye of the demoniac, the unclean spirit was transfixed the same moment, the dart of divine power shot from the glance of Jesus, penetrated into his very heart. He was instantly seized with such strange and mysterious apprehensions as no evil spirit had ever experienced before. He began to tremble until the whole bodily frame of the man whom he had possessed, was distorted with the most frightful convulsions. At last, he “cried out,” being no longer able to contain himself. He “cried out;” not for mercy and forgiveness: he well knew, that for him there was no mercy—no forgiveness. It was the cry of despair; the cry of a devil in despair, under the fearful apprehension that the time was now fast approaching for the overthrow of his kingdom. There must have been something terrible beyond conception in that cry—that voice, the like of which never sounded in the ear of mortal man before. How awfully glorious is the display of His power made by our

divine redeemer on this occasion ! A power so mysteriously exercised that no one in the synagogue was made directly to feel it, except the evil spirit—a power that compelled that stout-hearted spirit to quail, and to tremble before it, and to become an unwilling suppliant at His feet ! His cry was, “Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth,” &c. Jesus had not said a word unto him as yet ; He had only glanced at him, and that was sufficient to produce all this trembling and crying.

This was the first encounter of the Captain of our Salvation and the prince of this world after the forty days’ temptation in the wilderness. Mark, how different is the tone of the devil now from what it was then. On that occasion he addressed Jesus with an “If thou art the Son of God.” The *if* is dropt ever afterwards—there is no *if* in his address in the synagogue.—“I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.” If Satan and his angels had any doubt that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Son of God, and the promised seed, previous to that encounter, it was entirely removed then. As yet they had no instance of His power being exercised directly against them, in casting them out of any of those miserable men whom they had possessed ; but the time had now come to bring that also to bear upon them. Satan was the aggressor in the first encounter, but Jesus is the aggressor ever after. His defeat in his first attempt had entirely deprived the devil of courage to venture on another attack ; he always assumed the defensive subsequent to that event.

The subject I should wish briefly to discuss, founded upon this remarkable narrative, is—

THE GREAT CONTRAST EXISTING BETWEEN THE STATE OF FALLEN MEN AND FALLEN ANGELS, ACCORDING TO THEIR DIFFERENT RELATIONS TO THE MEDIATORIAL ECONOMY ; *or, The different influences which the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh had on the condition of mankind, and the condition of the fallen angels.*

In regard to their fallen state as such, men and devils are

in essentially the same condition. Both "have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Both have rebelled against the same divine authority and government—both have transgressed the same holy law, and became obnoxious to its just penalties—both have incurred the same condemnation, and deserved the same eternal death. We may adopt the language of the apostle, when he discusses the comparative state of Jews and Gentiles, and apply it to the case under consideration: "What then? Are we better than they? No! in no wise, for it is proved, both men and devils, that they are all under sin." If, therefore, there is any difference made between them, it must be attributed to the sovereign pleasure of God;—a difference, the reasons for which are, probably, far above our comprehension, and hidden in the infinite depths of His inscrutable counsel;—into which it would be highly presumptuous for us to attempt to pry. It behoves us to adore and magnify His boundless grace in the manifestation of His loving kindness towards us in Christ Jesus; being perfectly confident that His ways in this mysterious dispensation, though unto us past finding out, are both just and holy.

The manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh is the most marvellous and important event that any world has ever known. What may have been its direct or indirect influences on the interests of other intelligences in the vast dominions of Jehovah, we know not; but we can understand in some measure the nature of its bearing on our condition and that of fallen angels. His presence on earth resembled the pillar of cloud that went between the camp of Israel and the camp of the Egyptians; which gave light by night to the former, but to the latter was a cloud of darkness and confusion. The same pillar beamed forth rays of life and comfort to the Israel of God, and at the same time emitted forth confusion and death upon their enemies. The appearance of Jesus Christ on earth was indeed unto us a pillar of light, of life, and of hope; but a cloud of darkness wearing the most terrific aspect towards the camp of fallen

angels. Let us observe the contrast from the words of this unclean spirit, recorded in the narrative.

I. HE INTIMATES THAT JESUS HAD COME TO DESTROY THEM, I. E. FALLEN ANGELS, AND TO SAVE MEN. "Art thou come to destroy us?" Even so: thou art right. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." "He became a partaker of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." These, therefore, were the great objects of His mission, to destroy devils and deliver mankind. Not to destroy their being: that shall never be destroyed; that was not the thing which this unclean spirit apprehended; but the destruction of their works—the frustration of their malignant designs against mankind—the overthrow of that kingdom of darkness, of sin, and of damnation, which they had founded and set up in this world—the redemption of men from under their dominion;—this, this is the destruction they so greatly fear. How terribly malignant are these enemies of our souls, who can find no other enjoyment save in our utter ruin and eternal perdition. The whole fraternity are animated by the same spirit and disposition. This one in the synagogue is a fair representative of his brethren. "Art thou come to destroy us?" he exclaims,— "Art THOU come? Then, indeed, it is all over with us; what we so greatly feared for ages and generations has fallen upon us at last. We never had reason to tremble in the presence of any human form on earth before; we might well have afforded to treat every effort to overthrow our dominion with scorn and derision, had it not been for Thy appearance."

On the other hand, He came to save and to deliver men. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." How often we hear Him proclaiming this glorious declaration.—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him

should not perish, but have everlasting life." "For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." It might, indeed, have been expected, that when the angel from heaven proclaimed His nativity, a shout of universal joy and acclamation would have burst forth from a devil-ridden world, to welcome the deliverer; exclaiming, Blessed redeemer, the desire of all nations, "*Art thou indeed come?*" There is yet hope for us. "Let the heaven rejoice, and the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof; let the field be joyful and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice." Let men catch the words and the spirit of the angelic song, and unite in one universal chorus—"glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The language of the unclean spirit further intimates—

II. THAT FALLEN ANGELS ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THEY HAVE NO INTEREST WHATEVER IN CHRIST AS A SAVIOUR, AND THAT MEN ALONE ARE INTERESTED IN HIM IN THAT CHARACTER. "What have we to do with thee?" "Nothing whatsoever; we know that Thou art a Saviour, but not unto us. Thou hast assumed the likeness of a sinful nature in order to redeem that nature from sin and condemnation; but it is not *our* nature. We know that there is in Thee an infinite fulness of mercy and compassion, but not a drop for us. Thou hast power to forgive sins and to save to the uttermost, but we have nothing to hope from the exercise of that power. Let us alone: this is all we ask of Thee; and even this is more than we may hope to obtain. Thy power to save is the cause of our ruin—the salvation of mankind is our destruction."

How different is the case with us! In Christ we behold our Saviour clothed in our nature, being in all things made like unto us. "For, verily, he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." "Unto *us* a child is born, unto us a son is given." It was

for us he lived and died, and rose again the third day; he is the propitiation for our sins, and our advocate with the Father. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." We have a right to claim Him all-in-all as our appointed Saviour, and to come boldly to the throne of grace in His name; to lay hold on all the blessings of eternal life, secured unto us by His atoning blood.

The unclean spirit further intimates :—

III. THAT THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS, AS THE SON OF GOD AND THE SAVIOUR OF MEN, FILLED THE FALLEN ANGELS WITH THE KEENEST APPREHENSION AND DESPAIR; THE VERY SAME KNOWLEDGE BEING THE LIFE AND SALVATION OF MEN. "I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God." This was the sword that pierced him—this knowledge forced him to tremble, and to cry out. He, indeed, witnessed a good confession—the very same confession that Simon Peter afterwards witnessed. Here we have a devil believing in Christ, trembling before Him, and confessing Him, all to no purpose; and he knew that himself. But why should he thus publicly confess and own Jesus to be the Son of God? Would he not have apprehended that his confession might eventually prove the means of conviction to the hearers, and of converting them unto the same faith in Christ? Or did he hope to gain his point by flattering our Saviour—offering that confession as a temptation to induce Him to let him alone, and not to cast him out? We know not what were his motives. It appears probable that the unclean spirit was so much terrified and agitated that he lost all self-possession and control, so that he spoke without having any particular motive, and regardless of all consequences;—as men often speak under the impulse of some sudden emergency. Is it not amazing that evil spirits did know and acknowledge Christ when men knew Him not, and denied Him? "As for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." So said the Pharisees unto the man that received his sight. "Why,

herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is," was the pertinent reply. Had Jesus proposed the question unto this unclean spirit, that He afterwards proposed to His disciples on the borders of Cesarea Philippi, saying, "Who, do ye devils say that I the Son of man am?" The answer would have been very different to that which He obtained from them. The devil would not have said, "There are very different opinions among us concerning Thee, similar to those entertained by men. Some say Thou art Elias; some, Jeremiah, &c. O, no! *we know Thee*. There is but one opinion in hell respecting Thee. Would that we could be as ignorant as men are! Such ignorance would, for the present, save us these dreadful pangs—these fearful apprehensions; but, alas! we cannot avoid the conviction—a conviction to us far more bitter than death and annihilation."

When Peter witnessed the same confession, Jesus said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon bar-jona." The same knowledge and belief that augment the torments and agonies of fallen angels are the peace, the salvation, and life of fallen men. "This is the life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

IV. OBSERVE HOW DIFFERENT IS THE CONDUCT OF JESUS TOWARDS A FALLEN ANGEL IN DISTRESS, TO THE COMPASSIONATE TENDERNESS WHICH HE ALWAYS MANIFESTS TOWARDS MEN IN A SIMILAR CONDITION. "And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him." He had no look of compassion to bestow upon an unclean spirit, no word of encouragement to say unto him, no ear of mercy open to receive his supplication. He would not accept his confession; He would hold no parley with a devil; He regarded him with a severe frown and rebuked him in the most severe language. How meekly He could endure the contradiction of sinners against himself! And yet how austere is His behaviour to an evil spirit when pleading thus tremblingly at His feet. A

holy angel might have felt disposed, perhaps, to remonstrate with Him on this occasion, saying, "Blessed Lord, behold these ungrateful men, who are now present before Thee, refuse to acknowledge Thee ; they know Thee not, neither do they recognize Thy divine mission ; they believe not in Thee as the Son of God. Accept, therefore, the faith and confession of this wicked spirit, since wicked men refuse to own Thee." No ! "Hold thy peace : " "I have nothing to do with thee ; thy faith and confession I regard not." "Come out of the man." He takes up the quarrel of the man against his oppressor. Never did He act thus to a distressed sinner of the human kind. Many cried unto Him in their distress, and to no one did He ever turn a deaf ear. The Canaanitish woman cried after Him one day on the road, and though at first He appeared as if He regarded not her cry, and afterwards gave her what might have been deemed a harsh answer and a severe check ; it was only to call forth the strong faith that was in her to a still more lively exercise. Mark the sequel,—“O woman, great is thy faith ; be it unto thee as thou wilt.” Poor blind Bartimeus cried unto Him, “and many charged him that he should hold his peace ;” but as long as Jesus Himself did not charge him to hold his peace, the poor beggar continued crying, and cried the more a great deal. Well done Bartimeus ! There is a music in that cry to the ear of Jesus, however harsh it may sound in the ears of thy fellow men. “And Jesus stood still.” The cry of a poor, blind, distressed, beggar, has arrested His course, it has moved His compassion ; He “commanded him to be called,” and when he had come nigh, “Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee ?” The blind man said unto Him, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” “Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole,” was the gracious response. No distressed sinner ever cried in vain unto Him.

In conclusion, let us—

First: *Behold and adore both the goodness and severity of God.* On the angels that fell, severity ; but towards us

fallen men, goodness. "O the depth of the richness both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways, past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to Him be glory for ever. Amen."

Secondly: *To what an infinite state of dignity, and glory, we behold our nature exalted in the person of the Son of God! So that mankind can lay claim to a closer, and a more intimate, affinity with the Deity, than any other created nature.* He is the common Father of all; but in Christ Jesus, He was manifested in *our* flesh; He became our brother: being made of a woman, and being found in fashion as a man, that in our nature and fashion He might contend with him that contended with us, and deliver us from the power of our mighty and terrible adversary. Therefore, man, have respect for thyself; consider that thy *nature* is henceforth sacred; having been assumed by the Son of God, and in Him raised above all the principalities and powers in heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, even the Father, and all dominions in the universe, subjected to Him! How horrible, then, is the thought, that man should degrade himself by wallowing in the filth of sin and pollution. In the name of Emmanuel, let him arise, return, and act worthy of the dignity that has been conferred on his nature; and leave the degrading service of sin and iniquity to those hopeless spirits who have been doomed to remain for ever bound in the chains of darkness and despair.

Thirdly: *Are we not warranted to suppose from the facts recorded in the narrative, which has been under our consideration, that, had a similar offer of a Saviour as that made to fallen men, been made to fallen angels, it would have had a different reception?* Would not the unclean spirit have gladly changed position with the man he had possessed? Would he not have cried to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness, and not that He should let him alone, had there

been an open door of hope before him? Surely the conduct of the evil spirit condemned the conduct of the unbelieving men that were present on that occasion; they went away from the synagogue in amazement, "questioning among themselves," and that was all they heeded of the devil's confession; they had witnessed his expulsion out of the man; they had seen the demoniac restored to his right mind; they had witnessed all this, and they marvelled, and questioned, and doubted, and no more—they believed not. There are still many under the gospel ministry who very much resemble them. When an extraordinary manifestation of divine power accompanies the ministrations of the word, their attention is aroused, their feelings are awakened, they marvel, and question at these things, and remain in their unconverted state as before. "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?" exclaimed Peter to his hearers at Solomon's porch. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted."

Fourthly: *How awfully important is the position which men under the dispensation of the gospel occupy—a middle position, between the state of holy angels in heaven and the state of fallen angels in hell.* They are not to remain long in this condition. Every human soul under the gospel must soon, either rise higher than the angels in glory and bliss, or sink lower than the devils in misery and perdition. Every believer in virtue of his nearer relationship to the Son of God shall enter into a state of a more intimate fellowship with the Deity, than the angels; whilst the reprobate sinner, by reason of his unbelief, having neglected and rejected so great a salvation, shall bring down upon himself a heavier condemnation than that incurred by fallen angels, for whom a Saviour was not provided, and to whom an offer of salvation was never made. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world. and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its *widest* truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological, remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

NINETEENTH SECTION—*Matt.* viii. 5—13.

The Centurion; or, the Representative Believer.

JESUS was now in Capernaum, a city, situated in a triangular and fertile plain, on the north-western side of Genesareth's memorable lake. Here, amidst luxuriant vales and imposing hills, mountains and streams—in the presence of the beautiful and grand in nature, Jesus seems to have spent the greater portion of His public life, wrought most of His "mighty works," and proclaimed most of His soul-transforming truths.

The incident recorded in the historic fragment before us as having taken place on Christ's entering Capernaum, is one of great spiritual significance. Judea, being at this time in subjection to the Roman empire, had garrisons of soldiers in all its chief towns and cities. One of the officers who had the command of a hundred soldiers, a Centurion, residing at Capernaum, where, probably, Roman troops were garrisoned, hearing of Christ's arrival into the city, applied to Him on behalf of an afflicted domestic: he besought Him saying, "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy,

grievously tormented." The narrative shows that, though a heathen, he had, like many of the Pagans of his age, out-grown his religion, and was possessed of something higher. Paganism with him had evidently become obsolete; it was a soul-garment worn out and folded up; his heart had laid it by, and he had advanced, not only to Hebrew Theism,—for Luke tells us that he had built a synagogue,—but was looking out still for a higher and purer faith.

The promptitude with which Christ attended to his request, and the high testimony which He bore to the greatness of his faith, when He said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," leads us to regard him as a *representative believer*.

We shall look, then, on this narrative, as an illustration of the man's great faith; and we observe:—

I. THAT IT WAS CHARACTERIZED BY AN UNBOUNDED CONFIDENCE IN THE DIVINE CAPABILITY OF CHRIST. In order to appreciate the extent of his confidence in Christ's divine ability, let us analyze his language and we shall find that his faith includes three things:—

First: *A belief in Christ's capability to direct all forces.* "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." The idea of this Roman officer obviously is; that as my hundred men are under my absolute command—for as soldiers, they have no will of their own—they are bound to fulfil my behest as their military chief; so, all things, all laws and events, all forces and operations, all things and beings, all agents and agencies, visible and invisible, are at Thine absolute disposal. Thou art the great CHIEF of the universe; Thou canst marshal all its forces at Thy pleasure. This is faith in Christ as the King of kings, and the Lord of Lords. Here is—

Secondly : *A belief in Christ's capability to direct any forces to a specific end.* He believed that Christ could despatch some invisible healing messenger to his home, and to the sick-bed of his poor afflicted domestic. There are some who, while they regard Christ as the head of the universe, seem to speak of Him, as if He did nothing more than superintend the universe, in working out its pre-established and immutable laws ;—merely watch, as it were, the workings of the machine. Such was not the faith of this Centurion. He regarded Christ as having power to despatch, at that moment, some invisible healing power to his poor afflicted domestic. He did not regard Christ as so bound to any set of governing laws, as to allow Him no discretionary and divergent action, nor so taken up with the vast and the grand as to have no interest in the minute and the humble. Here is:—

Thirdly : *A belief in Christ's capability to direct His forces to a specific end by mere volition.* “Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed.” Thou needest not employ any means, Thou needest not even come to my house. Distance is no obstruction, either to Thy knowing or working. All that is wanted is, Thy WILL. “Speak the word only.” Thy word is almightiness. What a sublime faith in Christ is this! How broad and firm its grasp! What clear and comprehensive views of Him does it involve! How keen and far-seeing the eye, to discover in the poor Galilean, this almighty energy and absolute dominion! What Hebrew, what child of believing Abraham ever displayed such faith in Him during His mortal sojourn here? Well might He say, “Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in *Israel*.”

II. HIS FAITH WAS ASSOCIATED WITH A DEEP INTEREST IN HIS DOMESTICS. “Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.” Luke says, “That he was sick and ready to die,” and that he “was dear unto him”—the Centurion. The exact nature of the servant’s

disease cannot be propounded with certainty. Jahn supposes it to be a "Cramp, which in Oriental countries, is a fearful malady, subjecting the patient to exquisite sufferings, and inducing death in a few days." The narrative teaches that it was intensely painful in its nature, and fatal in its tendency.

Now, we do not aver that the interest which this man displayed in his servant, was the result of his faith. Though a soldier, he may have been a man of deep and tender social sympathies—sympathies, which military studies, engagements, and habits, so destructive to all that is genial and loving, as well as to all that is morally just and honourable in our nature, had failed to obliterate. Nor do we assert that the feeling of sympathy here manifested, could not exist, apart from faith in Christ. Fallen and depraved as our nature is, examples are not few of individuals, who have no connexion with Christianity—who possess, and practically develop, a tender and benevolent interest in the afflicted of their species. But what we assert is, *that wherever there is true faith in Christ, there will always be the display of the deepest interest in our race, and especially in our domestics.* You may find such kindly feeling as the Centurion's, where there is no faith in Christ; but you will never find faith in Christ where those generous and sympathetic feelings are not. Faith in Christ *involves* convictions, necessarily tending to deepen, widen, and strengthen, the social sympathies, to the utmost extent. Does it not involve convictions as to the brotherhood of the race—the essential equality of the race, the moral guiltiness of the race, the priceless value of each member of the race, the self-sacrificing love of Christ for the race? If these convictions are involved in an intelligent faith in Christ, how is it possible for such faith to exist without the profoundest sympathies with our fellow men?

What shall we, then, say of Christian slave-holders, so called, who work their fellow-men like beasts of burden, and trade in them as cattle? Nay, what shall we say of

those employers nearer home, who call themselves Christians, but who are heartless, arrogant, petty, CZARS in their little domestic and mercantile empires; who speak to their servants and assistants with the imperialism of an autocrat, work them through the hours which nature has appointed for recreation and sleep, and are practically regardless, alike of their physical and spiritual interests? Say of them? They are hypocrites! Their social conduct gives the lie to their religious professions. *If a man has faith in Christ, he must have loving sympathy with men.*

III. HIS FAITH WAS ASSOCIATED WITH A DEEP CONSCIOUSNESS OF PERSONAL UNWORTHINESS. His consciousness of unworthiness is seen, First: In the fact, that he does not presume to approach Christ directly, and in person, at first. "He sent unto him elders of the Jews." (Luke vii. 3.)* "The Centurion," says Olshausen, "impressed by the circumstance

* "Whether the Centurion came himself and spoke, or only by those whom he sent, can scarcely be determined with certainty, and affects the question but little. Without St. Luke's account, we should unhesitatingly understand the former from the letter of St. Matthew, but the exceedingly definite account of St. Luke must have as much weight as the prerogative of St. Matthew's eye-witness. Both have been united in the supposition that the man, in the unrest of his great desire, had sent once and again, and at last had come himself. This might be possible, but appears to be contradicted by St. Luke (v. 7). If according to St. Luke the first request was not urged in person, yet must verses 5, 6 of St. Matthew be understood in connection with this, and St. Luke v. 10 admits most assuredly of no other coming and going than that of those who were sent. Therefore we, for our part, would concur with *Bengel*, who holds St. Matthew's account to have been written *sublimiore divinæ quam humanæ lege*. That is, not that it is indeed immaterial whether any man speaks by himself or by messengers (for there would be no justification of untruthfulness in this); but it is no *untruthfulness* to place one instead of the other, as the authoritative language of Scripture elsewhere teaches. How often in the Old Testament, does speaking by the medium of others assume all the living reality of speaking in person! Compare in the New Testament Matt. x. 35 with Luke xii. 53." *The words of the Lord Jesus.—Stier.*

of his being a Gentile, dared not venture on approaching the Messiah in his own person ; wherefore, he sought the intercession of the representatives of the old covenant, with whom he was closely connected." The doctrine of mediators, if it springs not from, is very congruous with, a profound sense of humility. His feeling of personal unworthiness is seen, Secondly : In the language he expresses,—“Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof.”

Man in office, is given to highmindedness. When “dressed in a little brief authority,” he is prone to swell out with the feeling of conscious greatness, strut and swagger, and play the little lord. But this Centurion, though the commander of a hundred brave Romans, felt his insignificance in the presence of Jesus.

A profound consciousness of moral unworthiness is an essential concomitant of faith in Christ and true religion. How deep was this feeling in Jacob when he declared himself unworthy “of the least” of God’s mercies !—In Job, when he abhorred himself “in dust and ashes !”—In Isaiah, when he exclaimed, “Wo is me ! I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips !”—In Paul, when he declared himself the least of all saints !—In John, when he fell at Christ’s “feet as dead !” Faith in Christ is the finite mind in the felt presence of the Infinite ; the corrupt and guilty mind in the felt presence of absolute holiness and eternal rectitude. Can any mind be in such a posture without experiencing the profoundest sense of unworthiness ? Impossible !

“The more thy glories strike my eyes,
The humbler I shall lie.”

IV. HIS FAITH WAS FOLLOWED BY AN INTRODUCTION INTO THE GRACIOUS EMPIRE OF GOD. “And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Whether “the kingdom of heaven,” here means

the spiritual reign of God over the soul on earth or in the celestial state, does not matter ; inasmuch as the former is the germ and pledge of the latter. He that has come under the gracious reign of God here, already participates in the ethereal felicities which are perfected in the upper world.

The words present three thoughts in reference to the introduction of this Centurion into this blessed state :—

First : *It was an introduction to a scene which he would share with vast multitudes, from different and opposite parts of the world.* “Many shall come from the east and the west ;” and Luke adds (xiii. 29.) “from the north and the south,” meaning, of course, from every part of the globe—from ever clime and zone. “Many,” not a few. Morbid pietism says a *few*. Narrow-hearted bigotry says a *few*. A soulless sainthood says a *few*, and a scribe-theology says a *few*. But Christ says, “I say unto you ;”—I who know all things, who know every man of every generation that shall ever be, I, who *now* distinctly see the immeasurable heavens, with all their “many mansions,” completely populated as they shall be after the great day of judgment has passed by and become a distant fact in history ; I say unto you that “MANY shall come.” When we think of the vast proportion of our race that die in infancy, and remember that “of such is the kingdom of heaven ;” when we think of the probability, that our world is but in its childhood ; that humanity, now, is but as a babe beginning to open its eyes of thought upon the creation, and to feel what life is ; and that as numerous ages have been taken up in bringing it even to this stage of childhood, the sun of *many* ages more must shine, and the vital air of many ages more must flow, to train it into manhood ; when we think of the moral birth of “nations in a day,” and the many glowing visions which the inspired prophets had of numerous generations that are to come, in which “all shall be righteous ;” when we think of the infinitude of restorative provision in Jesus Christ ; when we think of the pictures that Jesus drew of the final state of

humanity, in which he shows that there was but one out of three stewards who abused the trust—only one found at the wedding feast who had not on the qualifying costume ; and when we think, that in the days of John, eighteen hundred years ago, the multitudes of the saved were such as “no man could number” ;—when such subjects as these pass under our review, we get the deep and soul-uplifting faith that the saved will far out-number the lost, as stars out-number the passing meteors of the sky.

Another thought which these words present in reference to the introduction of this Centurion to this blessed state is :—

Secondly : *That it was an introduction which would insure to him the most glorious society.* These millions, gathered from all ages and lands, shall “sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ;” and by implication, the Centurion with them. “Shall sit down.”* The spiritual enjoyment of Christianity and heaven are frequently set forth in the scripture under the image of a festive banquet. Sitting down or reclining on the couch at the banquet of celestial joy implies, (1.) *Social equality.* Jesus, in thus representing Gentile people from remotest parts as coming into the kingdom of heaven and sitting down with the chief of the Jewish patriarchs, most probably intended to strike an effective blow at that narrow prejudice of the Jews, which led them to regard the Gentile as too inferior and unclean for social intercourse with them. Jesus would teach, that His system was for Gentile as well as Jew, that heaven would be the home of men and not sects ; and that all there would be on a *blessed equality*—they would sit down together. The little social and religious distinctions—all the “partition” walls of conventionality, which divide society here into little formal and cold-hearted sections, are “broken down” by *practical* Christianity, and are not found in the

* Literally, shall *recline with*. “The Oriental posture at table is not like ours, a sitting, but a recumbent, one. Those who eat recline on couches.”—*Livermoor*.

upper world of perfected humanity. All there are in their "Father's house;" A child-like sympathy, a brotherhood of sentiment, a community of interest in the One Father, God, and the One Elder Brother, CHRIST, make the mighty millions ONE in spirit and in aim. "Sitting down," (2.) implies, *Social repose*. There is, there, none of that want of confidence in each other; none of that suspicion about each other's veracity, affection, and honesty, which, like a serpent coils about social circles here, and darts its rankling poison into the very veins of earthly friendship; nor any of that painful feeling of inferiority which, in the social circles of earth, the *would-be* great are constantly seeking to produce; nor any of that diversity of sentiment and aim, which here, leads to painful collision, to envy, and rivalries. But all that cheerful and unbounded trust, thorough at-homeness and hearty identification of motive and purpose, which give to the humblest member of the glorious circle a blessed feeling of ease and repose. Ah me! What imagination can picture the social blessedness of that state? What will it be after all the toils, and trials, and turmoils, of this earthly scene, to sit down with the greatest spirits of all ages—poets, sages, prophets, historians, orators, authors, apostles, reformers, martyrs, and ministers; to listen to the narration of their experiences during the long centuries that have passed over them, to hear their great and lofty thoughts about God and His universe, to respond lovingly to their divine impulses and suggestions, to blend sentiment and intermingle soul with them!

Another thought which these words present, in reference to the introduction of this Centurion to this blessed state is:—

Thirdly: *That it was an introduction to a scene of blessedness, from which some of the professed people of God will be excluded.* "The children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The children of the kingdom, literally, refers to

the Jews, who were, as STIER expresses it, "*born in the typical kingdom of God.*" Many of them were excluded—were "cast off," while the Gentiles came in. It is suggested, that exclusion from this kingdom is a lamentable catastrophe. The kingdom of heaven is compared to a Jewish feast, generally celebrated in large, splendid, and well-lighted apartments. In contrast with this is the condition of the excluded. Cold dark and terrible. Outer darkness, where the excluded would weep with disappointment and remorse, and gnash their teeth; referring either to the chattering of teeth produced by the intense cold, or the effect produced by the agony and rage of the self-excluded soul. What a picture of hell is this, and how sad the thought that it is the doom of many of the professed people of God. How many of the men that worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem are there! How many members of churches are there! How many that prophesied and taught in the name of Christ are there! "When we come to heaven," says Matthew Henry, "we shall miss a great many there that we thought would have been going thither."

V. HIS FAITH WAS REWARDED BY THE FULFILMENT OF HIS DESIRES. "And Jesus said unto the Centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour." Here is a practical illustration of this principle.

Let us cultivate faith in Christ as strong as this representative believer—then we shall appeal to Him in all our trials—we shall be humble—we shall be introduced into the kingdom of God, and we shall have our desires fulfilled. "LORD INCREASE OUR FAITH!"

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT :—*The Rationale of Constitutional Defects.*

“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him, saying, master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”—John ix. 1-3.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-fifth.

THE disciples evidently had the idea that all such calamities as that with which this man was afflicted, were the immediate result of sin—the sin of the sufferer or the sin of the parents. The idea that it was the sin of the parents might be based on Exodus xxxiv. 7: “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” The idea that it was the sin of the sufferer himself might be based upon the heathen doctrine of metempsychosis; or the transmigration of the soul from some previous state of existence, of which it is now oblivious, to its present connexion with the body; and that, in that previous state it had committed some sin for which it was doomed to this calamity:—for it could not be for any sin that the man committed *after* his birth that he was *born* blind. Christ corrects this false notion; “neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”

The meaning usually attached to these words, no doubt, from the fact that Christ immediately proceeds to open the man's eyes, is, that he was born blind in order that this miracle, or work of God, in opening his eyes, might be

manifested. But we see in the words a deeper signification than this;—this is only one half of their meaning. There is here the principle which accounts for all the deformities in nature and providence—all exceptions to general rules: it is, that the rules themselves may be more clearly manifested. A man is born blind in order that the wisdom and goodness of God's works may be more distinctly manifested in giving men the organ of sight. If there were no exceptions, men would not be so struck, so impressed, with the general rule; they might regard it as a necessity that they are what they are: but when the exception presents itself, then they see that they might have been other than what they are. When you see a blind man the thought is forced upon you that sight is not a matter of necessity, but a work of God;—and thus His works are manifested.

I. THIS PRINCIPLE ACCOUNTS FOR ALL THE DEFORMITIES OF NATURE. They are necessary in order that regularities and beauties may be manifested, and to show that they are not matters of necessity, but of design—works of God. This world would be less beautiful than it is, if it were all beauty;—the beauty would not be appreciated, through the want of contrast. The chaotic heaps that God has left behind Him, like fragments of a dismembered world, and the desert wastes, tend to manifest more distinctly the beauties of creation; and they show us that all might have been a chaos—that all might have been a desert waste, and that it is not a matter of necessity, but a work of God that this is not so. We contrast the beauties of creation with its deformities, and feel more fully that they are works of God. The occasional storms and clouds, with which we are visited, show us that the serene calm is not a necessity, but a divine work. The winter which strips the earth of its ornaments and tramples its glory in the dust, shows that it is not necessity, but the hand of God that clothes the earth with beauty. Were it not for these interruptions—these exceptions, man might go thoughtlessly on and see necessity

in everything, and not intelligence, goodness, and conscious design.

II. THIS PRINCIPLE ACCOUNTS FOR DEFORMITIES IN MAN. The blind man is a sacrifice—an exception for the public good, that you may more distinctly recognize the hand of God in giving you sight : thus you are led to look upon this organ, of which he is deprived, so exquisitely constructed, that its dissection fills men with deepest wonder, and the link of whose connexion with the mind is beyond the reach of human ken ;—you are led to look upon this as a work of God—of His goodness and wisdom. It is manifested to you through that blind man, in a way in which you would not otherwise see it. The *Idiot*, too, is this public sacrifice—this exception, that the works of God may be made manifest. As you look upon the idiot, do you not feel as you never felt before, that your being possessed with reason and mental faculties, is the work of God ? He who has made one that way, could have made all that way. Do not look upon yourself as a natural and a necessary growth ;—your reason, as an inalienable right, and not a boon. Your faculties are God's handy-work. His hand has balanced them with such hair-breadth nicety, that a little more imagination and you would have been a dreaming visionary ; a little more caution and you might have seen a lion in every path ; a little less and you would have plunged into every danger. Or, the balance of your mental faculties might have been so overthrown, as that you would have been a maniac. Or, they might have been so defective, as that you would have been an idiot. Every time that you look upon such an object, God's works in you are manifested. This principle will, of course, apply to all other human deformities.

III. THIS PRINCIPLE ACCOUNTS FOR THE CALAMITIES OR DEFORMITIES OF PROVIDENCE. We receive good at the hand of the Lord, and we also receive evil ;—and but for the evil, we should not fully appreciate the good. Men would not

value, as they do, the pleasures of life, but for its trials. Health is most highly appreciated by those who have known sickness ; plenty by those who have known want. Go into the abode of poverty, or stand by the bed of sickness, see the miseries of life in others, and you will recognize more distinctly the hand of God in the blessings bestowed on you. Let a mother witness the death of another's offspring amid all the agony with which it tears the heart, and see how she will press her own child to her bosom and look up with grateful eyes to heaven, and see in its continued existence the hand of God. The calamities and adversities that happen to others are not intended for themselves alone. They are singled out from the crowd and made the sacrifice, not only for their own, but also for the public good. Every cloud of adversity that sweeps across the horizon of society and visits the individual, calls the attention of all who witness it to their serener circumstances, as the work of God. One year's war, produced by very trifling causes, may lead us to see, as we never saw before, how much we are indebted to God for forty years' peace. Men recognize God in the evil—in the affliction, and he must be a malignant being if he see not the author of the good ;—and yet it is necessary for Him to send the evil in order to awaken man's attention to the fact that He is the author of the good, and thus His works are manifested.

IV. THIS PRINCIPLE HAS BEEN CARRIED INTO THE REGION OF MORALS ; AND IT HAS BEEN THOUGHT THAT EVEN MORAL EVIL—MORAL DEFORMITY, IS NECESSARY FULLY TO MANIFEST THE EXCELLENCY OF MORAL GOOD. This brings us to the question of the origin of moral evil. But we must not rashly enter "where angels fear to tread." There is here a depth which the vulture-eye of the intellect hath not yet seen. The excellency of holiness may be, and doubtless is, more distinctly manifested through the presence of sin ; but every moral sentiment, within us, instinctively revolts from the idea that God is the author of sin. Philosophy and

reason may be baffled in attempting to account for it without God, but neither philosophy nor reason can silence those moral instincts which thunder forth their negatives to such an hypothesis from the depths of the soul. Those who contend that God is the author of it, wish to show that it is but a deformity in the moral world, similar to the deformities which we witness in the natural world; and is intended to show more clearly the beauty and excellency of what is good. They thus endeavour to get rid of everything like a sense of guilt. It is not guilt they say; the depraved are rather the sacrifices for the good of others—to manifest rather the beauty of moral excellencies than the deformity of guilt. Such are rather the apologists for evil, than the advocates of good.

God permits evil; though He is not the author of it. The possibility of it is involved in free agency; and, doubtless, its existence does subserve this end of manifesting more clearly the excellency of good. The man who has known sin, felt the aching heart and conscience which are its result, must the more appreciate the conscious peace and joy which spring from holiness of heart. Some look back to a depth of agony which makes them shudder, and cling with stronger grasp to the righteous and the good. Society, too, appreciates the good more fully from witnessing the evil that there is in human nature; and that good is more distinctly seen to be the work of God. Man is not good by necessity of nature;—we see that he may be bad. Angels, also, may be thus benefited. It is not necessary that they should taste the evil, any more than it is absolutely necessary that you should be the subject of providential adversity in order to be benefited by it. They see the depth of misery and degradation into which man and some of their own race are sunk by sin, and this shows them more distinctly the dignity and bliss of their own condition of perfect holiness.

In conclusion—

First: *We see that all suffering is not the immediate result*

of sin. We are not hastily to estimate a man's character by his sufferings. "The eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them were not sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem, because they suffered such things." Whether all sufferings be more or less remotely connected with sin, is another question. Some decide this in the affirmative. We are not prepared to do so. May not an innocent being be subject to suffering? He cannot suffer the stings of conscience and the frowns of God, it is certain. But may not an innocent being suffer from anxiety about others, and from other causes which are perfectly innocent? Angels rejoice over the repentent sinner. May they not sorrow over the impenitent? Do they feel no grief when God is dishonoured? All this is a very different thing from the agony of remorse resulting from sin. It is not inimical to true happiness; that strange experience may even promote and purify their bliss. We look not for a heaven that would deprive us of the power of feeling even painful sympathy. Sympathy, like mercy, is twice blessed. It blesses him that feels it, as well as him for whom it is felt. "There is a magic in each tear such kindly spirits weep for man." They open fountains of bliss in him who sheds them, as well as in the object over whom they are wept. To suffer in some sort may, perhaps, be a law everywhere, in order to enter into glory.

Secondly: *This shows how such objects as the one mentioned in the text,—the blind and the idiot should be treated.* Treat them with sympathy, kindness, and respect, as public benefactors. They are sacrifices—unwilling, unconscious sacrifices, it is true,—for your good. It is for you, rather than for themselves, that they are thus. They bear the cross for you; and if God has made them sacrifices, He will amply compensate for it. We know not what He has in store for them. When He Himself places a cross, you may confidently anticipate a crown.

Thirdly: *You see the end for which they suffer thus;—that the works of God may be made manifest.* Whenever you

meet a blind man or an idiot, let this enter your mind; and think with gratitude of Him by whom you are so fearfully and wonderfully made. Let this fact enter your mind at every sick bed you visit—health is God's gift. Mothers, think of this whenever you see any child borne to the tomb—it is that the works of God, His goodness to you, may be more clearly manifested.

A. CLARK.

Stockport.

SUBJECT :—*Temperamental Discipleship.*

“And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests,” &c.—Luke ix. 57-62.

Analysis of *Homily the Hundred and Fifty-sixth.*

JESUS Christ is entitled to be called “a good teacher.” He aroused the attention of the most indifferent, and enlightened the understanding of the most illiterate. His words expressed His ideas. They were not shades and clouds, but rays of pure light. All His intercourse with man evidently shewed that “he knew what was in man.” He knew the character of every individual of the multitudes that followed Him through His tours in Galilee and Samaria. Though He followed them not from infancy to manhood, one glimpse conveyed to Him a more accurate knowledge of them, than long years of familiar acquaintance would to the keenest of men. We have a striking instance of this in our text. On His return from His last tour in Galilee, through Samaria, “there went great multitudes with him,” and among them were the three disciples mentioned in our text.

They illustrate three different temperaments :—

I. THE HASTY AND ENTHUSIASTIC DISCIPLE.

First: *He formed his determination more under the in-*

fluence of excited feelings, than of an enlightened understanding. The wonderful words of Christ, His mighty deeds, the praises of the multitude, and probably his personal experience of relief from some affliction through Him, electrified and excited his feelings to the uttermost. He pushed forward, and stood face to face with Christ, and said, "Lord, I will follow thee, whithersoever thou goest."

Here is a striking specimen of hundreds in our own day. It is something in the voice that charms the ear, something in the outward man that electrifies the feelings; not the truth that enlightens the understanding, not the love that fascinates the affections, and not the deeds that compel adoration.

Secondly: *He depended too much upon his own strength.* "I will follow thee," &c. Thou hast many followers now, some I have no doubt will forsake thee; but whoever will return home to their former occupation and religion, "I will follow thee." The same disposition may be seen in Peter, when he said to Christ, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet, will I never be offended." Many have we seen of the same class, undertaking offices for which they had neither competent talent, nor sufficient grace.

Thirdly: *He was presumptuous as to future difficulties.* Ah! little did he think of the lonely paths which Christ had soon to tread, and the severe sufferings His followers had to undergo. But in his presumption, he was ready to go step by step with Christ. "I will follow thee *whithersoever* thou goest."

Alas! he is not the last that came to follow Christ without counting the cost. Boastful indeed they were at their first setting out; that they would be as brave as the lion, and firm as the oak, to withstand all opposition; and that the cold of winter, and heat of summer, would be alike to them. But they soon shewed, on approach of the storm, that it was all empty boasting. Christ compares those that have not fully contemplated the sacrifices and self-denial

which his service require, to a man that sets about building a tower, without calculating the expense, and is laughed at when his inability to finish it is manifested. Or to a king, who rashly goes to war with another of superior power. Luke xiv. 28-33.

Fourthly : *He was for following Christ from an unworthy motive.* This is clearly indicated in Christ's answer to him. He thought, after seeing Christ doing such great wonders, and seeing Him so popular in so short a time, that this was the safest and best way to honor and wealth. How utterly unworthy was his motive ! This has been the characteristic of the enthusiastic disciple in every age. Be not disappointed. "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

II. THE COOL AND DILATORY DISCIPLE. "And He said unto another," &c. Christ kindly asked him to follow Him. "Follow me." But he is not over hasty, like the other ; he wants to have more time to consider about it. "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." As if he had said, "Allow me to live with my father till he die : he has been a kind parent to me, in all probability he has not long to live, and I should not like to disturb his peace in his latter days by breaking up his household. After he is dead, I shall be obliged to go somewhere else to live, and I think I should prefer following Thee to any other mode of living. But however, I shall reflect farther upon the subject, and make up my mind when that has happened." Oh ! how cool and indifferent !

Alas ! it represents many of the present day. They do not despise religion as heresy, nor scoff at it as an imposition, nor yet reject it as a thing of no importance ; but they have a thousand other things to divert their attention from it at the present—things far more trifling than showing respect to an aged father. Even showing kindness to parents in affliction, and respect for them when dead, are subordinate to the great purpose of following Christ. Hear the answer

Christ gave His cool disciple. "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." The language is strong, penetrating, arousing, and fitted to bring him to decide rapidly. "Let those that are dead as to the higher interests of the gospel, attend to the lifeless clay." The interests of the gospel and the soul are of far more importance than any earthly considerations.

III. THE IRRESOLUTE AND PENSIVE DISCIPLE. "And another," &c. He is not over hasty like the first, nor long delaying like the second. He determines to follow Him, but his mind is very pensive, and he answers Him with a downcast look. "Lord I will follow Thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house." He wished for one last look at his home, and to have an opportunity of bidding adieu to his kind relations, and to obtain their approval.

We need not go from our own congregations to find many of the same class. Some are afraid of hurting the feelings, and incurring the displeasure, of their relations and friends, by embracing religion. Others are afraid of the service and obligations of religion; and others are afraid of the sacrifices and self-denial which religion requires. Such a spirit, is utterly unworthy of the followers of Christ. We must work out our determination through a host of fears. "And Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

H. E. THOMAS.

SUBJECT:—*The Unbearable Wound.*

"A wounded spirit who can bear?"—Prov. xviii. 14.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-seventh.

THERE are two great classes of evils in the world—natural and moral. These, in all beings, provinces, and worlds, bear the relation of cause and effect. Natural evil arises

ever from moral. Sin is the primal font of all suffering. BUT WHAT IS THIS UNBEARABLE WOUND? There are sufferings that *are* bearable. (1.) Physical sufferings are endurable. Men have been known to bear the most excruciating bodily pains with calmness and composure. Martyrs have sung triumphantly in the flames. There is a power in the mind to deaden animal susceptibilities. (2.) Mere mental sufferings are endurable. The mind receives many wounds here which it has learnt to bear, and which it must bear. There is the wound of *disappointment*: blasted hopes, frustrated plans, and broken purposes, often inflict heavy wounds on the mind; but they can be borne—faith in the providence and fatherhood of that God who clothes the lilies and feeds the ravens will enable the spirit to bear it. There is the wound of *slander*: the tongue of calumny, by impugning motives, impairing reputation, misrepresenting character, may inflict a deep wound; but it can be borne. With a consciousness of virtue, the spirit can rise in majestic defiance against the attacks of the slanderer. There is the wound of *sympathy*; such as Jeremiah felt, and Howard felt, when they witnessed the sufferings of their fellow men; such as Jesus felt when he wept over Jerusalem, and Paul when he wished himself “accursed.” There is the wound of *bereavement*. The disruption by death of the tenderest ties that unite man to man inflicts a heavy wound upon the heart. These wounds are common every-where. —There is a Saul weeping for Jonathan, a David for Absalom, a Rachel for her lost children. But these wounds can be borne. Faith in the future may console; an acquiescence in the plan of God will enable the sufferer to say, “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away,” &c.

What then is the *unbearable* wound of which Solomon speaks? It is MORAL. It is the wound of remorse, of compunction, self-denunciation, self-contempt, and self-loathing. It is the wound of a spirit feeling not only that the universe is against it, and God is against it, but its *own self* is against it. It is the wound that Cain and Judas felt.

But why is this wound unbearable ?

I. BECAUSE IT DISQUALIFIES THE MIND FROM AVAILING ITSELF OF ANY OF THE ORDINARY MEANS OF SUPPORT. What are the *ordinary* means of sustaining the spirit under trial ?

First : *A consciousness of rectitude.* Let the greatest trials come upon me, let disappointment, slander, bereavement, &c.;—if I have the consciousness of rectitude, I can rise above them all. Let conscience stand by me, and I feel myself strong in the presence of the greatest dangers and the most malignant foes. But ah ! the wounded spirit has not this. Conscience is against it ; its greatest foe is itself, &c.

Secondly : *An assurance of the unavoidableness of the suffering.* Whatever trials come, if a man can believe, as the old Stoics did, that they are the results of an absolute necessity, of an iron fate, he may reconcile himself to them, console himself with the idea that none of his efforts could have averted them. But not so in the case of this wound ; conscience charges the sufferer with producing it : it does not refer it either to any creature or the Creator, but to *self*.

Thirdly : *An unshaken confidence in God.* Whatever trials come, if a man has confidence in the wisdom, justice, and power, of God, he will calmly abide the issue, and wait the great explaining day. Job, in the midst of all his trials said, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold ; though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And Paul said, "I know in whom I have believed," &c. And on another occasion Paul said, "The Lord stood by me." (2 Tim. iv. 17.) But the man with this wounded spirit has no trust in God ; all interest in Him is gone, all confidence in Him is lost. He is *consciously* without God.

Fourthly : *Hope in a brighter future.* What a power has hope to sustain the spirit under the trials of life ! How great were the trials of Job ! And what sustained him ? Hear his language :—"I know that my Redeemer liveth,"

&c. But the man who has this wounded conscience has no bright future. His future is midnight—a midnight whose heavens are charged with everlasting thunder-clouds.

“Darkness above, despair beneath ;
Around him flame, within him death.”

Fifthly : *The expressions of friendly sympathy.* Let me be the subject of every wound but this ; incarcerate me in a dungeon, take from me all that makes life valuable, yet let a friend visit me and his kind words will cheer the gloom. But the man who has this wound of conscience is deprived of sympathy. In the first place, men will not sympathise with a man suffering on account of his own sins ; all consciences are made to censure rather than to pity a man who is in rebellion against heaven. Who can pity a man for being *false, dishonest, impious* ? None. It is not in any moral existent to do so. And in the second place, if they would give their sympathy, he could not apply it. A man suffering under remorse is *ashamed* of his sufferings. He is not ashamed of his bodily sufferings ; he will speak of them to others, and seek their sympathy ; nor of other mental sufferings : but he is ashamed of his *moral* sufferings ; he will not tell of his crimes against heaven, nor seek the sympathy of others in them. He has

“None to bless him; none whom he can bless.”

II. BECAUSE IT IMPELS THE MIND TO USE ITS CHIEF FACULTIES TO ENHANCE ITS AGONY. What is the chief faculty ? It is the faculty of *thought*. By thought man can deaden his physical agonies and bear himself up above other mental trials. Thought can take the prisoner from the dungeon abroad into the open universe ; the pauper into the paradise of God ; the martyr in agony into the felicity of heaven. But this faculty a *guilty* conscience will ever employ for its own torment. Thoughts are governed by different principles. Sometimes intellect controls them, then they take

the man into speculation; sometimes imagination, then they take him into poetry; sometimes avarice, then they take him into worldliness; sometimes sensuality, then they take him into a world of lusts; but when the *guilty conscience* is excited it governs them, and then it takes him into a HELL; for it directs them to two terrible subjects of contemplation:—(1.) *The crimes of the past*, and (2.) *The retributive judgment of the future*. Well, then, might Solomon say, “A wounded spirit who can bear?”

Sinner! the conclusion of the address is, that you must either have a hell, or seek at once a SPECIAL remedy. I say SPECIAL. *Ordinary means of support will not do, as we have seen.* The elements of hell are within. Within are the fuel of the last fires, and the gathering clouds of the last outer darkness.

Do you exclaim?

“Which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell: MYSELF am hell.”

Where is the SPECIAL remedy?—“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the SINS of the World.” Here is the PHYSICIAN for this wound.

SUBJECT:—*The Spiritual Discipline of Humanity.*

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.”—Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-eighth.

THE passage suggests two introductory thoughts:—

First: *The spiritual function of nature.* What is the grand moral office of the visible creation? To reveal God. The

visible is the mirror of the Infinite Invisible. God reveals Himself through creature existences. No words can fully reveal Him. There is no part of nature, however humble, that does not reveal something of Him. He compares Himself to the "rock"—the "sun," the "lion, the "eagle," &c. Each shows a divine something; but all—the whole universe, can only reflect a few rays of the Infinite Sun.

Secondly: *Man's great duty in relation to nature.* What is that? To study it: study it not merely to discover riches, formulate sciences, &c., but to see God. If God made everything to reveal something of Himself, we should look at everything with this view—look at the universe as a gallery filled with pictures of God;—pictures, not of His person, but of His attributes, tendencies, relations. *Natural history is a glorious Bible;*—a Bible, however, unstudied by the millions.

The subject of the words before us is *The spiritual discipline of humanity.*

I. THAT THE GREAT END OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF HUMANITY IS TO SECURE THE RIGHT ACTION OF OUR POWERS. The "eagle stirreth up her nest" in order to induce the young ones to use their energies. Naturalists tell us that when the eaglets are old enough to fly, the kind and industrious parent breaks up the nest and forces them to fly to some neighbouring crag. The object is to induce them *to make use of their own powers.* This God says He did with the Israelites. Man's powers are either *inactive*, or *wrongly* active;—in either case he tends to ruin. What is *right* action? Let us take the answer from the incident before us. First: *It is a constitutionally befitting action.* What does the parent bird require her eaglets to do? Just that which they are *made* to do—put their little pinions into action and mount toward the sun. We are made to *love*, *study*, and *serve*, God. Secondly: *It is a self-reliant action.* The parent bird seeks to make her young ones trust their own

powers. Self-reliance is not self-sufficiency. Self-reliance is the condition of progress, and implies a trust in moral principles and in God. Thirdly: *It is a divinely prompted action.* The parent bird prompts the young ones by her "fluttering," &c. God must prompt us before ever we shall act aright. *He must give the impulse.*

II. THAT THE MEANS OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF HUMANITY INVOLVE A VARIETY OF DIVINE ACTION. "Stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings," &c.* First: *Here is a stimulating action.* It is said that the eagle breaks up her nest to induce the eaglets to fly. Is not this a picture of God's dealing with His people? Abraham, the Jews in Egypt, the disciples on account of the first persecution, are examples. He takes health, property, friends, children, away, to stir us up to action. Secondly: *Here is an exemplary action.* The parent "fluttereth over them" to show them how to use their wings. God teaches by example. The pillar was an example in the wilderness. Christ is our example now. In Christ we see how we *can* act, and *ought* to act. Thirdly: *Here is a protecting action.*

* Sir Humphrey Davy who had an opportunity of witnessing the proceedings of an eagle family after the young had left their nest, thus describes it: "I once had a very interesting sight above one of the crags of Ben Nevis, as I was going, on the 20th of August, in the pursuit of black game. Two parent birds were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the manœuvres of flight. They began by rising from the top of a mountain in the eye of the sun. It was about mid-day, and bright for this climate. They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually extending spiral. The young ones still slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted, and they continued this sublime kind of exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight."

“Spreadeth abroad her wings.”* It is said that when she finds her young ones weary or unwilling, she spreads her wings, takes her brood upon her back and soars with them aloft. In order to exercise their strength, she then shakes them off; and when she finds that their pinions flag or that an enemy is near, she darts beneath them with surprising skill, and at once restores their strength, and places her body between her young and the danger that threatens them. What a striking representation of God’s protecting care is this!

III. THAT THE GENIUS OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF HUMANITY IS EVER THAT OF PARENTAL AFFECTION. What but the parental instinct of kindness stimulated the parent bird to do all this? That kind instinct is an emanation and divine reflection of the feeling which the great Father has for His countless offspring. That parental love is the spirit of the disciplinary system under which we live is evident from numerous scriptures.†

If the parental affection is the spirit of discipline, two practical conclusions follow;—First: *That there should be on our part a cordial acquiescence.* Our Father knows what is best. He knows what we require. Secondly: *That there should be, on our part, an endeavour to realize the end of discipline.* Job felt this. (Job xxiii. 10.) Psalms lxvi. 10-12.

If we are nestling down in material comforts, O, Eternal Spirit, do thou, like the imperial bird, chosen symbol of thyself, break up our resting places, force us to the right use of our energies, and guide us into the sunny realms of thine own glory!

* Deut. xxxiii. 27. Psalms xxvii. 5; cxxxviii. 7. Isaiah xxxii. 1-2; xliii. 2-3. 2 Cor. xii. 8-10. Heb. ii. 18; iv. 15.

† Psalms ciii. 13, 14; cxix. 67, 71; cxxvi. 5, 6. Eccle. vii. 2, 3. 2 Cor. xiv. 17, 18.

SUBJECT:—*The moral disparity between Man's Thoughts and Ways and God's Thoughts and Ways ; an argument for a moral change on man's part.*

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts," &c.—Isaiah lv. 7, 8.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Fifty-ninth.

I. THAT THE GREAT GOD HAS ENDOWED MAN WITH CAPACITIES TO ACT IN SOME MEASURE LIKE HIMSELF, INASMUCH AS BOTH HAVE THEIR "THOUGHTS AND WAYS." *God has His thoughts*—thoughts about *Himself*—the universe; about all actualities and possibilities. Some of His thoughts have been embodied, and their forms destroyed, centuries ago. Some are now embodied in creation, in historical events, in Redemption, &c. Some are yet to be embodied in new universes, &c. And some will never take form. There is an infinite ocean of thought in the divine mind that has never yet taken form, and never will. Some portions will come out in new creations and events, as the ages course along; but boundless depths will ever remain unexplored. *God has His ways.* He has settled *methods* of action. He has a method of creating, governing, destroying, and saving. Hence science and art, which imply *settled* methods.

Man has his thoughts. He is full of thought, of some sort or other. He thinks by a necessity of his nature; his power to think is the glory of his nature. *Man too has his ways.* He has *his methods* of doing things, &c.

II. THAT BETWEEN THE THOUGHTS AND WAYS OF "WICKED AND UNRIGHTEOUS" MEN AND THOSE OF GOD THERE IS AN IMMENSE MORAL DISPARITY. "My thoughts are not your thoughts," &c. We say *moral* disparity, for *natural* disparity must exist by an eternal necessity. We may mention two points of *moral* difference. *One in relation to being in general, and the other in relation to enemies:*

and, First, as to the former, *God's thoughts and ways are concerned for the general happiness, those of wicked men for personal ends.* The universe shows that God aims at the general happiness; every plan of wicked men shows that they are aiming at the gratification of self. Self is more to a wicked man than the creation. Secondly, as to the latter, *God's thoughts are concerned for the pardon of the offender, those of the wicked for punishment.* (1.) God graciously offers pardon to the offender. Do the wicked do so? (2.) God graciously offers pardon to offenders much *beneath Him.* Do the wicked do so? (3.) God graciously offers pardon to offenders who have repeatedly rejected His overtures. Do the wicked do so? (4.) God graciously offers pardon through a wonderful sacrifice—His Son. Would the wicked do so? Oh! There is an infinite moral disparity.

III. THAT THE MORAL DISPARITY BETWEEN THE THOUGHTS AND WAYS OF WICKED MEN AND THOSE OF GOD RENDERS A CHANGE ON THE PART OF THE FORMER URGENTLY NECESSARY. "Let the wicked," &c. And why? Because, "my thoughts," &c. The difference is the reason which Jehovah urges for the change. Two thoughts are implied here and will show the strength of this reason. First: *A moral disparity of thought and way between the creature and the Creator is eternally incompatible with the creature's well-being.* God's thoughts and ways are the resistless forces of the universe. He who thinks and acts contrary, battles against every wind and wave of being, and the mighty Spirit in all. He must be crushed. Secondly: *That the removal of this disparity will never take place by any change on God's part.* The words imply this, and this is a great truth. God cannot change, and there is no need for Him to change. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c.

Here, then, is the argument; if a moral disparity exists, and if the removal is essential to our well-being, and if God *cannot* change, "Let the wicked," &c. Man *can* change—he *does* change—he *must* change God-ward, or be damned.

IV. THAT THIS GREAT CHANGE ON THE PART OF THE WICKED IS ENCOURAGED BY THE ASSURANCE, THAT GOD WILL MERCIFULLY DEAL WITH HIM ON HIS RETURN. "He will have mercy on him"—"He will abundantly pardon." See the Father receiving home his prodigal son. This is a picture of the great Father receiving sinners. "He will abundantly," &c.

SUBJECT :—*Beneficence Transcendently Important.*

"And the king shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt. xxv. 40.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Sixtieth.

JESUS was no friend to indolence ; His whole life was a protest against it, and a force to destroy it. His acts, and words, and spirit, gave impulses to human activity, whose force has been accelerating to this hour. In the context He gives the *true reason*, the *true rule*, and the *true inspiration*, of human activity.

First: *He gives the true reason.* What is the true reason? It is two-fold. (1.) All our powers are "talents" given to be employed, and not to be wrapped in the "napkin" of indolence. (2.) The employment of these powers is, in the nature of the case, indispensable to our well-being (28, 29.). Indolence wastes being ; right actions increase it. It is the necessary law of the moral universe that minds rise by labor and sink by indolence.

Secondly: *He gives the true rule.* To what extent are we to labor? What is the measure? "Every man according to his ability." One man can do more than another, and he is bound to do it. Obligation is commensurate with power ;—they terminate at the same point.

Thirdly: *He gives the true inspiration.* What is to be

the primary, prompting, impulse? Avarice, ambition, sensuality? These are impulses. No! LOVE;—disinterested love for God and man. LOVE is the original spring of being—the spirit of the creation, the life of Jesus, the genius of Christianity, the soul of moral goodness, the atmosphere of heaven.

There are three things in the text which show the transcendent importance of this *practical* love, or beneficence.—

I. THE VAST SCOPE WHICH HEAVEN HAS MADE IN THE ARRANGEMENTS OF SOCIETY FOR ITS OPERATION. Jesus here refers to the gradations that exist in society. He speaks of the “least;” implying that there are classes that rise higher. Were all alike, there would be no sphere for practical benevolence. But in human society there is all but an endless variety. No two are alike. One has what the other has not, and what the other requires. And thus beneficence has ample scope. For example, First: *There is the “least” in secular possessions.* Some are destitute, some are opulent. The rich have plenty of scope for their beneficence. Secondly: *There is the “least” in relation to intellectual power.* Some have much stronger minds than others—minds to seize a truth and compass it in all its relations. Here is scope for the beneficence of the intellectual. Thirdly: *There is the “least” in relation to experience.* What a gradation in the experience of men—from the child to the aged sire! Here is scope for the beneficence of the seniors of circles. Humanity rises, by men imparting and transmitting their experience. Fourthly: *There is the “least” in relation to religion.* Some are “babes” in Christ, some are “young men,” some are “fathers.” Here is scope for the beneficence of the maturer saint among his brethren.

Are all these varieties in society accidental? No! they are preordained by God, and that for the purpose of affording ample scope for the practical display of love.

Another thing in the text which shows the transcendent importance of this beneficence is :—

II. THE ENDEARED CONNEXION OF THE LOWEST IN THE SOCIAL SCALE WITH CHRIST. “These my brethren.” His brethren are amongst the “hungry,” the “stranger,” the “naked,” the “sick,” the “imprisoned;” the poorest of the poor, the most afflicted of the suffering. “He that receiveth you, receiveth me,” &c. (Matt. x. 40.) “Why persecuteth thou ME,” said Christ to Saul of Tarsus.

There are two ways in which the connexion of the “least” with Christ serves to shew and stimulate the importance of this beneficence. First : *It heightens our respect for man, as man.* Man, stripped of all, destitute, oppressed, afflicted, is inestimably precious. He is the brother of Christ. Christ wears his nature, died in that nature, and *for* that nature. Secondly : *It indicates the way of practically expressing our gratitude to Christ.* How shall we best show our love to Christ? Not by repetitions of creed, formal prayers, hymn-singing, &c. But by kindness to His disciples. “Ye did it unto me.”

Another thing in the text which shows the transcendent importance of this beneficence is :—

III. THE DECISIVE INFLUENCE IT HAS IN DETERMINING THE DESTINIES OF ETERNITY. Here the curtain of eternity is drawn, and the dread transactions of the judgment revealed. Men are divided into two great sections. On what principle does the decision take place? On any difference in physical structure? in intellectual power? in mental attainments? in secular position? No! The principle is BENEFICENCE. Some were kind and some were not.

Why should this principle be so fundamental—have such stupendous influence? First : *Because without it, there is no conformity to God.* “He that loveth not, knoweth not God”; —it is the root of moral excellence. Knowledge is nothing

without love. Secondly: *Because without it, there is no fitness for heaven.* All there is love. God is love, and all love in Him. Thirdly: *Because without it, there is not, in the nature of the case, any possibility of happiness.* Love is the sun of the soul.

Well might the apostle, then, say, "Without charity I am nothing;"—nothing in relation to nature, providence, God. This is the life of the heart. There is a great difference between the brute and man—between the Savage and Milton, but greater between the man that has this love, and he who has it not.

SUBJECT:—*The Solution of Religious Difficulties.*

"Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, go," &c.—Matt. xi. 2-6.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Sixty-first.

John's former expressions concerning Christ—

I. THAT THE FAITH OF, EVEN THE BEST IS SOMETIMES OVERCLOUDED. The causes may be several:—

First: *When our fidelity to God's cause involves us in external difficulties.* As in John's case. He was in a gloomy prison.

Secondly: *An imperfect understanding of the divine plan of operations.* John did not understand Christ's aims and plans.

II. THAT WE OBTAIN THE VICTORY OVER DOUBTS, ONLY BY DIRECT APPLICATION TO CHRIST. There are false methods of struggling with doubt.

First: *Such as the method of abstract reasoning.* But the truths of salvation are objects of faith, and not the re-

sult of human speculation. They are apprehended by the heart, and Christ alone can rectify the strife of the heart.

Secondly: *The method of consulting theological systems.* This is flying to human, instead of to the divine, authority, and is relying upon the deductions of the human intellect instead of relying upon the efficacy of prayer and the teaching of the divine Spirit. This only bewilders us by multiplying distracting questions.

III. THAT CHRIST SOLVES OUR DIFFICULTIES BY PRACTICAL AND NOT BY SPECULATIVE ANSWERS. Two marks that he is a divine Saviour.

First: *What he has actually done for the sins and sufferings of man.* The argument is cumulative.

Secondly: *The value He sets upon man as man, independently of his external condition..* "The poor have the gospel preached unto them."

The public value of John's faith—the private value of his doubts.

C. SHORT, M. A.

SUBJECT:—*Hand Religion.*

"But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table."—Luke xxii. 21.

Analysis of *Homily the Hundred and Sixty-second.*

I. THAT THE HAND MAY BE BUSY IN RELIGION WHERE THE HEART IS HOSTILE TO ITS SPIRIT. The hand of Judas was on the table probably very *conspicuous* and very *active*. But where was his heart?

II. THAT JESUS EVER DISCOVERS THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE HAND AND THE HEART. "The hand of him that betrayeth me." "He knows what is in man." He looketh to

the heart. Observe:—First: *That hypocritical religion is very foolish.* For Christ cannot be imposed upon. Secondly: *Must be very abhorrent to Christ.* No class roused Christ into such terrible indignation, as hypocrites. Hence His startling and oft-repeated fulminations.

III. THAT THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE HAND AND THE HEART IS CERTAIN OF EXPOSURE. In the case of Judas it soon appeared to the world. He was soon unmasked; and before the ages he stands as the abhorred representative of hypocrites. And so it will ever be. The hidden things of darkness must be brought to light.

W. WILLIAMS.

SUBJECT:—*The Cry of Humanity and the Response of the Gospel.*

“Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it?” &c.—Romans, x. 6-9.

Analysis of Homily the Hundred and Sixty-third.

I. THAT MAN CRIES FOR THE SUPERNATURAL. “Who shall ascend into heaven? that is to bring Christ down from above.”

II. CHRISTIANITY RESPONDS TO MAN’S CRY. What saith it? “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach.”

III. THAT THE PRACTICAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE RESPONSE IS SALVATION. “That if thou shalt confess, with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt *be saved*.”

ανθρωπος.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers.

AUGUSTIN.

(Continued from p. 354.)

AUGUSTIN'S "Confessions" is the key to his Theology, for this is the logical result of his spiritual history, and that history is recorded here. Here he pours forth his inmost heart before God and man, and utters, as far as words can utter, his profoundest sorrows and joys. The work does not lose by comparison with others of the same genus in modern times, such as Rousseau's "Confessions," and Goethe's "Truth and Poetry." It has been the most read, because it is the most living, of all his works; and, spite of a certain morbid taint, and of occasional prolixity, men can hardly read it without benefit in head and heart. Here is the fire of love towards God, which you catch by contact; here, likewise, is a most contagious scorn of things vain and transitory. His aim in writing it was to prevent people from forming too good an opinion of him by hearsay, that they might not think him better than he knew himself to be. There frequently occur passages of great depth and beauty, wherein we see both the Christian and the Platonist. On the whole it is a book which the Christian, the student of human nature, and the metaphysician, will read; and which, in reading, will manifest the interesting fact, that whatever Augustin knew and believed was not known and believed at second-hand, but fought out at every step, not without pain and toil and loss of blood. The discerning observer will perceive the vital connexion between these "Confessions" and his theology, every article of which is stained with the sanguine drops wrung from his heart in the acquisition.

For a more systematic view of Augustin's theology, we may conveniently consult his "Handbook; or, Book of Faith, Hope and Charity," written about the sixty-seventh year of his age. It is dedicated to Laurentius, a very learned man, and probably an officer in the Roman church. In expounding the Faith, it follows the order of "The Apostles' Creed;" in treating of Hope, it deals with the

Lord's Prayer, and it concludes with six chapters on Charity. The manner in which the various topics are treated has an evident reference to their respective heresies.

"He desires Laurentius to become truly wise. Wisdom and piety are one; whence the question, How God is to be worshipped? Answer, by Faith, Hope and Charity. What in religion is to be followed, what by reason of heresies to be avoided, how far reason may contend for religion, or what may be above reason, what is held as the beginning, what as the end, what is the sum of the whole subject, and what the sure and peculiar basis of the Catholic Faith. All these may be known by knowing well, *what should be believed, what hoped for, what loved.* These are to be affirmed by reason, which begins either from the bodily senses or the mental intelligence. What is unattainable by either of these paths is ascertained from witnesses, namely, the writers of Scripture; who, divinely aided, whether bodily or mentally, could see those things, or even foresee them. The mind imbued with faith tends by living well to reach that Likeness, in which to holy and perfect hearts there is revealed ineffable beauty, the full vision whereof is the chief felicity. The beginning, then, is the commencement of faith; the end, to be made perfect with the Likeness. This also is the sum of the whole subject. But the sure and peculiar basis of the Catholic Faith is Christ. Since Laurentius asked for a book to hold in the hand, and not to load chests, Augustin speaks merely of what is to be believed, what hoped for, what loved. To deal with these only is easy, but to deal with heresies, were long and arduous. 'Every one,' saith the prophet, 'that shall call on the Lord shall be saved.' For this invocation we have the Lord's Prayer. 'But,' comments the Apostle, 'how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?' Hence the creed. Faith believes, hope and charity pray. But these cannot be without faith; so that this faith also prays. Faith is both of good and evil things, and yet faith is good and not evil. Faith is also of past, present, and future things. Faith is of our own things and of others. But hope is only of good things, and only of things future, and belonging to him who is said to hope for them. Therefore faith is to be distinguished from hope, both in word and in difference of conception. Further, what respects not seeing, whether the question is of believing or

hoping, is common to faith and hope. By accommodation, we may say without absurdity, that we believe what we see. But that is more properly called faith, according to the divine mode of speaking, which is of things which are not seen. To believe in good things future, is to hope for them. Faith profiteth nothing without love. Hope cannot exist without love. 'The devils believe and tremble;' but neither hope nor love, but rather fear what we hope and love. The Apostle therefore approves and commends the 'faith which worketh by love,' which cannot be without hope. Hence neither is love without hope, nor hope without love, nor either without faith.

To seek then what things are to be believed :—We follow not either in investigation or fear of nature those whom the Greeks called *Physicians*; who found not out all things, and, in those which they boast to have discovered, guess more than they know. It is enough for the Christian to believe that the cause of all created things whatsoever is the goodness of the Creator, who is the One and True God, and that there is no nature which is not either Himself, or from Him; and that He is a Trinity, namely Father, and Son begotten by the Father, and Holy Spirit proceeding from the same Father, but that One and the same is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. All things are created good; but not absolutely, nor equally, nor unchangeably; yet good singly, and very good universally, for in all consists the admirable beauty of the whole. Evil is only a privation of good, and is permitted by God, that He may effect good by means thereof. All natures, since they are made by an absolutely good, are good. But the good in them can be either lessened or increased. This lessening of good is corruption. Every nature, even if vicious, is good, inasmuch as it is nature, is evil in so far as it is vicious. There were no evil were there no good, and an evil man is an evil good. Good and evil, though contraries, may co-exist in the same thing. Evil arose from things good, and can be only in things good. This does not contradict the Lord's words, 'A good tree cannot bear evil fruit;' for both good and evil trees may grow in the same ground.

Happy the man, who studying nature's laws,
Through known effects can trace the secret cause.

Virg. Georg. ii. 490. Dryden.

It is not necessary that we should know the causes of motions in the corporeal world, but we ought to know the causes of things good and evil. To err is to take false for true, and true for false, or certain for uncertain. Not every error is injurious ; to err is sometimes useful, but not in morals. Here truth itself is the life of the soul. Deceiving injures the deceiver more than the deceived. Every lie is a sin, but some lies are greater sins than others, according to the intention, and according to the subject. It is also more tolerable to lie about things remote from religion than to be deceived in things indispensable to the worship of God. Yet an error, whether great or small, is always an evil. Every error is not a sin ; nor must we yield to those Academics who say that a wise man will not assent to anything, lest he should err. Our maxim is, *'The just lives by faith.'* Some Academics doubt that they are alive ; and they think that they thus avoid error. But were they not alive, they could neither doubt nor err. Errors about things which have no relation to the way which leads us Godwards, are not sins, but marks of the imperfection of our present state. Lies for the welfare of men are sins, but of a light kind.

The cause of good things is the goodness of God ; of evil, the will of angel and then of man ; being changeable good, forsaking the unchangeable Good. From this first evil, or privation of good, arose ignorance, and the lust of things injurious, whose companions are error and grief ; which, being felt, are followed by fear. When the mind has obtained an injurious or vain object, it is either overcome with sickly delight, or excited with empty joy. These evils are common to men and condemned angels. The peculiar punishment of man is the death of the body. Death was the threat uttered to the man gifted with free will, and placed under government in Paradise, as under the shadow of life, whence, by retaining righteousness, he might have ascended higher. The sin of Adam vitiated his offspring, born of carnal lust, and punished with the like, on whom passed original sin, death and condemnation. Whatever is done by the blind and untamed lust of those who are evil, and whatever manifest punishments they suffer, belong to the wrath of God. But His goodness ceases not, continuing life and power to evil angels, and maintaining the human race. He might and would have left men without remedy, had He

been just and not merciful, and had He not chosen to shew His pity in the liberation of the unworthy. The angels that forsook God were cast from the heavenly abode, and the rest remained with God in eternal blessedness and holiness. The angels were not propagated, like men, from one fallen and condemned, but the Devil, becoming proud with his companions, was with them destroyed by pride, whilst the rest adhered to God, receiving, what they did not possess before, a certain knowledge, whereby they were secure of their everlasting stability.

It was the will of God that restored men should supply the diminished angelic society, when the evil angels were cast out. That part of the human race to which God promises deliverance and His kingdom, cannot be restored by the merits of their works or by free will, but by God's grace through faith. Faith itself is the gift of God, and the faithful shall not fail in good works. It is God who worketh in us both to will and to work. Men are under the anger of God by original sin, to which they have added many and great sins of their own. The anger is not any perturbation, such as man's, but, by anthropopathy, His just vengeance receives the name of anger. Therefore a Mediator, or Reconciler, was necessary, to appease that anger by offering a unique Sacrifice, shadowed forth by all those of the law and the prophets. By the Mediator we are reconciled to God, and receive His Holy Spirit. The Word was made flesh, not by changing the divinity into flesh, but by taking the flesh up into divinity. He was born without sin, of a virgin. Christ Jesus, being One Son of God, and one Son of man, is both God and man. For the Truth, the Word, the only-begotten Son of God to take the manhood up into unity of person, so that the same Son of God should become Son of man, was an act of grace. The human birth of Jesus is from the Holy Ghost, which shews the same grace. But Jesus Christ is not therefore to be called the Son of the Holy Ghost; he was not *begotten* by the Holy Ghost, but his human nature was produced by the Holy Ghost, and Mary was his mother. Not everything which is born of another is called its son. The mode in which Christ was born of the Holy Ghost, shews us the grace which was natural to him, who could not admit sin; which grace is signified when the Holy Ghost is called the Gift of God.

Christ, who was himself free from sin, both original and personal, was made a sacrifice for sins for us, that we might be reconciled to God. Dying in the likeness of sinful flesh, he died unto sin; and expressed by his resurrection our renewed life. This is the great sacrament of baptism, which is celebrated, that we may die unto sin, and rise alive and new-born from the font, as he rose from the sepulchre. Both babe and old man die in baptism unto sin; the one to original sin only, the other to those also which he has added by an evil life. In speaking of sin and sins, the singular is often put for the plural, and the plural for the singular. Yet in that one sin which by one man entered into the world, and passed upon all men, many sins may be understood as included; as pride, impiety, murder, spiritual fornication, theft, avarice, and others. It is probable that babes are involved, not only in original sins, but also in those of their own parents. Accordingly regeneration is appointed because generation is vicious. He dares not rashly affirm concerning the imputation of the sins of the whole line of progenitors to children. The original sin of Adam, radical in his posterity, is only washed away by the One Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus. Christ was not regenerated when he was baptized by John; which baptism was one of water merely, and preparatory to Christ's baptism of the Holy Ghost. He wished to be baptized by John, not to wash away any sin, but to shew his great humility. Nor did death find in him any sin to punish. *In his death the Devil was vanquished by the truth of justice, not by the violence of power.* He submitted to both baptism and death, not from deplorable necessity, but for the sake of a fixed economy; that he, being one, might bear away not only one original sin, but all beside. No one born in Adam is free from condemnation, and no one can be set free therefrom save the new-born in Christ. By baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ, both adults and babes die unto sin, 'that they may walk in newness of life.' But unto what sin do babes die in the new-birth, but that which they bore at birth? The Christian life must be fashioned after the model of the cross of Christ, his burial, resurrection on the third day, ascension into heaven, seat at his Father's right hand. The future coming of Christ from heaven, to judge the quick and the dead, does not

belong to our present life. 'But when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' That Christ shall judge the living and the dead, may be understood in one of two ways; literally, or figuratively, of the just and the unjust.

After the Holy Ghost, who completes the Trinity, the Creed confesses the twofold Church, in heaven and on earth, the Temple of the Trinity. In the Church in heaven there is no evil member; nor since the expulsion of the angels that sinned, has any one fallen, nor will any one fall. What may be the condition and classes of that heavenly society, and whether the heavenly luminaries, by some regarded as not intelligent, belong thereto, is uncertain. To discuss the bodies of angels, is difficult; and, though not always, often unprofitable. It is more needful to discern the arts of Satan, when he transforms himself into an angel of light. We know better what the church on earth is, than what the church in heaven; but we shall know this also when we are joined thereto. The church is redeemed from all sin by the blood of the Mediator. Christ did not die for angels; yet his death reconciles angels and men, whom sin has separated, and the ruins of that angelic society are repaired by man's redemption. The holy angels know by divine teaching the number of men that will make up the wholeness of their society. In Christ, all things will be restored; those in heaven, when the deficiency is supplied by men; those on earth, when the men predestinated unto life are brought back. By the sacrifice of one Victim, peace is made between things on earth and things in heaven. The peace of God, which dwells in heaven, passeth all understanding. The peace among angels we know not yet, but they do; the peace of God Himself is known only to Himself.

There is in baptism a remission of original sin, and of actual, if any. There is also a remission of subsequent sins. Every crime is a sin, but not every sin is a crime. A holy man may live here without crime, but not without sin. But even with regard to crimes, the mercy of God is not to be despaired of by the penitent. The measure of time in penitence is not so much to be considered, as of grief. God only knows this fully; therefore they who preside over the churches rightly appoint times of penitence, that the church may be satisfied, wherein those sins are remitted, and

beyond which there is no remission. For she, properly, has received 'the earnest of the spirit.' The remission of sins takes place on account chiefly of the Day of Judgment. Remaining in the church, without good works, will not secure salvation; for such faith is dead. The obscure passage, 1 Cor. iii. 11-15., must not be understood as contradicting the above evident truths. It is not incredible that some of the faithful may be saved by some purifying fire; more slowly, or more speedily, according as they have more or less delighted in perishing things. But this does not apply to those of whom it is said, that 'they shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' 1 Cor. vi. 9., unless their crimes be remitted on penitence and almsgiving. But we must be careful not to suppose, that crimes may be atoned for by alms, and God be bought, when the life remains unchanged. For those daily minor sins, without which we do not live, the daily prayer of the faithful makes satisfaction. Prayer blots out those also of a worse kind, which are forsaken in penitence, if the prayer be truly said, 'forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.' Forgiveness is a kind of alms. The kinds of almsgiving are many, which help in the remission of our sins. But the greatest almsgiving is to forgive those who tresspass against us, and to love our enemies. God will not forgive them who do not forgive others. Alms will not cleanse the wicked and the faithless, without regeneration. If we would give alms in order, we should begin with giving alms to ourselves, 'shew mercy to our own souls,' and live piously and righteously, so as to please God. He who flees from unrighteousness shews mercy to his own soul. Which sins are light, and which heavy, it belongs to God to judge. Some sins we might suppose very light, if Scripture did not declare them to be heavy. Great and terrible sins come by use to be regarded as light, or as no sins at all. We sin from two causes; either by not seeing what is right, or by not doing what we see to be right. The one is an evil of ignorance, the other of infirmity. Against these we ought to contend; but, without divine help, we shall be overcome by them. God's mercy is needful for the producing of penitence, as well as when it is produced. He who does not believe that sins are remitted in the church, and despises so great a liberality of the divine favour, and obstinately dies in this state, is guilty of the sin that cannot be forgiven, against the Holy Spirit in which Christ forgives sins.

There are many questions connected with the resurrection of the flesh ; but no Christian should doubt the resurrection of all whatsoever have been or shall be born, have died or shall die. We dare neither deny or affirm with regard to abortions, that, in the resurrection, there will be a completion of formation, and a correction of deformity. I see not how to deny, that whatever is human, and has once begun to live, and is therefore capable of death ; would, upon death, at whatever time, pertain to the resurrection. Monsters will be rectified in the resurrection. No human flesh will perish, but, whatever have been its transmutations, will be restored to that soul which at first animated it. It is not necessary that the matter which had belonged to each part of the body should be returned with precision to that part. The body will be restored as a whole; and in comeliness. It is uncertain whether there will be diversities of stature and habit of body ; an orderly inequality, like that of voices, whereby harmony is fulfilled. The bodies of the saints will rise spiritual bodies, without corruption, and without concupiscence. Each of the damned will arise with his own body, with a death that cannot die, to be punished with the devil and his angels. Both the first and second deaths are consequences of sin, and, where there is the less guilt, there will be a proportionably more tolerable damnation. The damned will then know more fully the judgment of God, and the saints what blessing His mercy and grace have conferred upon them. Then the secret decrees of God, relating to the predestination of men, will be revealed.

The Omnipotent God does well, even in the permission of evil. The fact that God 'wills all men to be saved,' 1 Tim. ii. 3., but that all men are not saved, does not shew that the will of God is thwarted by the will of men. 'He doeth whatsoever it pleaseth Him,' Psalm cxv. 3. God is righteous in having mercy on one, and leaving another. The divine mercy is free, and man is incompetent to blame the divine judgment. Nothing takes place without the divine will, even though against that will. The piety of man, even if it will something different, is more in harmony with the will of God than the impiety, even if it will the same. God sometimes fulfils His good will by the evil will of man. The will of God is always unconquered, nor even can be evil, whether He shew mercy or harden. That God 'willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the

knowledge of the truth,' 1 Tim. ii. 4., may mean either, that no one is saved, but whom He wills, or, that He wills to save every kind of men. As God foresaw the sin of the first man, He prepared His will for the event, that He might bring good out of evil. The first man could avoid sin, or could sin; the one with reward for willing well; the other not with impunity. In the future, saints will be unable to sin, yet the will will be free. The first man could have avoided death; saints in the future will be unable to die. Such is the divine order. If the first man had remained righteous, it would have been by grace; but now a greater grace first sets the will itself free. Eternal life itself, the reward of good works, is the gift of God. The will of God is done, either by man, or by means of him. A Mediator was needful to reconcile us to God: this Mediator must be God.

During the time that intervenes between death and the resurrection, the souls of men are held in secret abodes, in rest or misery, according to the choice of each in the flesh. The souls of the departed are relieved by the piety of their surviving relatives, when the sacrifice of the Mediator is offered for them, or alms are made in the church. But these things profit those, who, when living, deserved that they should. They are not profitable to all. For the very good, they are actions of grace; for the not very evil, they are propitiations; for the very evil—even if ineffective for the dead—they in a manner console the living. Those whom they profit, they profit, either by procuring full remission, or by making damnation itself more tolerable.

After the resurrection and the judgment, there will be two kingdoms; the one of Christ, the other of the Devil. The punishment of the damned—even if somewhat mitigated at certain intervals—will be eternal. This eternal death will be common to all the damned; and eternal life—whatever the differences of honour—common to all the saints.

Of the things which are to be believed, those only belong to hope, which are contained in the Lord's Prayer. We must not hope in man, therefore not in ourselves, but in God. In Matthew there are seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer; whereof the first three relate to eternity, the last four to time. Luke gives the same more briefly in five petitions.*

* See the Vulgate of Luke xi. 2-4

Charity is greater and better than Faith and Hope, and 'is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.' There are four states of man ; of ignorance, before he knows the law ; under the law, when he is the servant of sin ; of grace ; of peace, life and resurrection. To these correspond four states of the church ; the first, before the giving of the law of Moses ; the second, under the law ; the third, under the grace revealed by the first coming of Christ ; the fourth, of glory. The grace of regeneration, whenever it finds a man, remits all past sins, and annuls the guilt contracted by birth. Death has no dominion over the regenerate. 'The end of the commandment is charity, God is love,' and the highest degree of it is, 'that a man lay down his life for his friends.'—Conclusion."

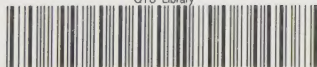
Thus then you have Augustin's theology in his own words. An inspection of the work itself would display some extraordinary exegesis. His "City of God," in twenty-two books, was written to refute the Pagans in attributing the taking of Rome, in 410, to Christianity. It is one of the greatest and most interesting of his works, is full of learning, and will be read by those who would know this Father. His two books of "Retractations" are a candid and noble-spirited review of his own works, in which he retracts, modifies, and explains, much of what he had written. Their date is 428. It were desirable to give here a few passages of power and peculiar beauty from his sermons—but this is forbidden by limited space and by an inexorable editor. The Benedictine edition of his works is in ten vols., folio ; the first containing the Retractions, the Confessions, and some minor pieces ; the second, Letters ; the third and fourth, Commentaries and exegetical Sermons ; the fifth, one hundred and eighty-three Sermons ; the sixth, various moral and dogmatical pieces ; the seventh, the City of God ; the eighth, works against the Manicheans and the Arians ; the ninth, against the Donatists ; the tenth, against the Pelagians.

On the whole, the figure of this Latin Father is of great eminence, consequence, and curiosity ; and acquaintance therewith would serve as a lamp through many otherwise dark regions in the history of Theology.

W. C.

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